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The Library Series

EDITED BY

DR. RICHARD GARNETT

V

ESSAYS IN LIBRARIANSHIP  
AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

## The Library Series

EDITED, WITH INTRODUCTIONS, BY DR. RICHARD GARNETT,  
LATE KEEPER OF PRINTED BOOKS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

- I. THE FREE LIBRARY: Its History and Present Condition. By J. J. OGLE, of Bootle Free Library.
- II. LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION, ARCHITECTURE, AND FITTINGS. By F. J. BURGOYNE, of the Tate Central Library, Brixton. With 141 Illustrations.
- III. LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION. By J. MACFARLANE, of the British Museum.
- IV. PRICES OF BOOKS. By HENRY B. WHEATLEY, of the Society of Arts.
- V. ESSAYS IN LIBRARIANSHIP AND BIBLIOGRAPHY. By RICHARD GARNETT, C.B., LL.D., late Keeper of Printed Books, British Museum.

# ESSAYS IN LIBRARIANSHIP AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY

RICHARD GARNETT, C.B., LL.D.

LATE KEEPER OF PRINTED BOOKS, BRITISH MUSEUM



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## P R E F A C E

THE essays collected in this volume are for the most part occasional and desultory, produced in compliance with requests of friends, or the appeals of editors of bibliographical journals or organisers of library congresses, to meet some special emergency, and treating of whatever appropriate matter came readiest to hand. The most important of them, however, though composed at considerable intervals, and devoid of any conscious relation to each other, are yet united by the presence of a pervading idea, which may be defined as the importance of scientific processes as auxiliaries to library management.

It seems almost preposterous to speak of typography as a scientific process, yet such it is in its relation to the graphic art which it superseded as an agent in the production of books. It would be the merest surplusage to advocate the application of printing to any class of manuscript books but one; and that, strangely enough, is the book of books, the catalogue. When it is considered how few of the great libraries of Europe have as yet managed to get their catalogues printed, and

in how many the introduction of print is as yet resisted, or beset with impediments hitherto insurmountable, it is clear that the benefits of printing may even now be set forth with profit. Fortunately, however, the question is but historical as regards the only library of which the present writer can presume to speak. Typography has now reigned at the British Museum for nearly twenty years, and any discussion of its advantages or disadvantages contained in the following essays may be regarded as out of date. It is hoped, nevertheless, that the historical interest attaching to the subject may excuse the reproduction of these papers. "Public Libraries and their Catalogues" (1879) depicts the hesitations of a transition period when the subject was in the air, but when the precise manner in which the introduction of print would take place was as yet uncertain. "The Printing of the British Museum Catalogue" (1882) describes the results of nearly two years of actual work; and "The Past, Present, and Future of the British Museum Catalogue" (1888) reviews the entire subject, both historically and with a view to the eventual republication of the catalogue. A fourth paper, contributed to the American Library Conference of 1885, has been withheld, to minimise the repetition which may be justly alleged as a defect in the essays now reprinted. The indulgent reader will consider that it was impossible to travel



repeatedly over the same ground without frequent recurrence to the same facts and arguments : and it has been thought better to tolerate an admitted literary blemish than to run any risk of impairing the documentary value of the articles. If the writer had once begun to alter, he might have been tempted to alter much. Readers of the present day may feel surprise at the tentative character of some portions of the first essay in order of date, and at what seems almost a discouragement of the idea of a complete printed catalogue. The principal reason was the moderate expectation then entertained of any substantial help from the Treasury. As a matter of fact, the annual grant bestowed in the first instance would have kept the catalogue forty years at press ; and, had a strictly alphabetical order of publication been adopted, it would after some years have been pointed out with derision that the great British Museum Catalogue was still in its A B C. The writer, therefore, exerted what influence he possessed to keep the idea of a complete printed catalogue in the background, and to enforce that of the publication of single articles complete in themselves which would be valuable as special bibliographies. A mere fragment of letter A, it was manifest, could be of little use beyond the walls of the Museum, but a separate issue of the article Aristotle might have great worth. The situation was entirely altered when the Treasury

so increased their grant as to afford a reasonable prospect of finishing the catalogue in twenty years instead of forty. The fragmentary system of publication was thereupon quietly dropped, and printing went on in steady alphabetical sequence. It is due to the Treasury to state that, since this augmentation of the grant, their treatment of this branch of the Museum service has been uniformly liberal. It is to be hoped that this bountiful spirit will not expire with the completion of the catalogue, but will find expression in a reprint incorporating all the accessions which have grown up while it has been at press, as proposed in a very able article in the *Quarterly Review* for October 1898.

After the application of print to the catalogue, mechanical process has rendered no such service to the British Museum Library as the introduction of the sliding-press, the subject of another essay. While, however, printing was the result of half a century of incessant controversy, the sliding-press seemed to fall from the clouds. Its introduction was a *coup d'état*; five minutes sufficed to convince the Principal Librarian of the soundness of the idea, and the thing was virtually done. No more striking contrast can be conceived than that between the condition of the Library the day before this feasibility was demonstrated, oppressed by the apparently insoluble problem how to find room

for its books, and the condition of the Library the day after solution, suddenly endowed with a practically indefinite capacity for expansion, save only in the department of newspapers. No one unacquainted with the internal economy of the Museum will fully appreciate the saving of public money, to say no more, effected by this simple contrivance.

Print and the sliding-press are now, along with the electric light, undisputed possessions of the Museum ; but telegraphy and photography, the two other applications of scientific ingenuity recommended in this volume, have not yet been enlisted in her service. When the printing telegraph obtains a footing, ample occupation will be found for it. Its most useful as well as most striking application, however, will probably always be the one principally dwelt upon here, the enabling every demand for a book made in the reading-room to be simultaneously registered in the Library, thus abolishing at a stroke the vexatious delays that now intervene between the writing of a ticket and its delivery in the proper quarter. The advantage alike to the public and to the staff is so obvious that the only question ought to be as to the applicability of electrical power to the transmission of legible messages under the special circumstances, which an intelligent course of experiments would speedily determine.

If telegraphy has been neglected, the same cannot

be said of photography. The most perfect unanimity exists within and outside the Museum with respect to the benefit which the adoption of photography as a department of the regular work of the institution would confer alike upon it and upon the public. Nevertheless, not a single step has been taken since the writer brought the subject forward in 1884, preceded as this had been by the successful introduction of photography at the Bodleian Library in connection with the Oxford University Press. Government seems unable to perceive the public benefit to be derived from the cheap reproduction and unlimited multiplication with infallible accuracy of historical documents and current official papers ; and although the Museum has of late successfully resorted to photography for its own publications, this has necessarily involved the employment of a professional photographer, whose charges are an insuperable impediment to any considerable extension of the system. It cannot be too emphatically reiterated that the question is entirely one of expense. So long as the photographer is a private tradesman he must of necessity be paid by his customers, and for any extensive undertaking must inevitably charge prices embarrassing to public institutions and prohibitive to private individuals. Make him a public salaried officer, and by far the larger part of the cost is eliminated at a stroke. What may be done is shown by the

recent exploit of the Newbery Library at Chicago, referred to in a note at page 86, which has turned the bewildering multitude of the "accession" parts of the British Museum Catalogue into a single alphabetical series by simply photographing the titles singly, and then combining the copies in a catalogue. It is quite possible that the enterprise may prove financially unremunerative, but this would not be the case if it had been executed as a portion of the work of a national institution controlled by the State, which on its part would have been recouped, or nearly so, by the patronage of private customers. It is only necessary to add that the State should on no account seek to make a profit out of photography, and that all transactions between the Museum or any other public department and the nation, where money is concerned, should be conducted on the principle of affording the greatest possible public advantage at the smallest possible cost.

Of the essays and addresses unconnected with this particular group not much need be said. As before mentioned, they are in general mere occasional pieces, called into being by the casual need for a literary contribution or a speech. On such occasions the writer has always endeavoured to select some subject somewhat out of the common track, with a distinctly bibliographical flavour if possible, but not quite so dry as an exact collation of all the

known copies of the Gutenberg Bible. In such a line he would have been little likely to distinguish himself. The Pope is not always a theologian, nor need the Keeper of Printed Books inevitably be a devotee of black-letter lore. The bibliographical erudition apparent in the essay on South American bibliography is entirely derived from Señor Medina's classic work upon the subject.

The biographical notices at the end of the volume have afforded the writer a welcome opportunity of paying a just tribute to men of eminence in the world of librarianship. The memoir of Sir Anthony Panizzi may demand some apology on the ground of the haste and slightness almost inseparable from an obituary notice indited *currente calamo*. The fame, however, of the man universally recognised as the second founder of the British Museum, can well dispense with polished eulogy. The notices of his successors, composed more at leisure, embody the writer's cordial appreciation of public service, and grateful sense of personal kindness. In conclusion, the author has to acknowledge his obligations to the Council of the Library Association, to Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co., and to others, by whose permission these essays are reprinted.

R. GARNETT.

May 18, 1899.

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# ESSAYS IN LIBRARIANSHIP AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

## ADDRESS TO THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION<sup>1</sup>

THERE are times in the lives of institutions as well as individuals when retrospect is a good thing; when it is desirable to look back and see how far one has travelled, and by what road; whether the path of progress has always been in the right direction; whether it may not have been sometimes unnecessarily devious; whether valuable things may not have been dropped or omitted, in quest of which it may be desirable to travel back; whether, on the other hand, the journey may not have been fertile in glad surprises, and have led to acquisitions and discoveries of which, at starting, one entertained no notion. The interval of sixteen years which has elapsed since the first meeting of this Association at London, suggests that such a time may well have arrived in its history. There is yet another reason why the present meeting invites to retrospection. We can look back in every sense of the

<sup>1</sup> Aberdeen, September 1893.

term. All our past is behind us in a physical as well as in an intellectual sense. We are as far north as ever we can go. There are, I rejoice to think, British libraries and librarians even farther north than Aberdeen, but it is almost safe to predict that there never will be congresses. We are actually farther north than Moscow, almost as far as St. Petersburg. Looking back in imagination we can see the map of Great Britain and Ireland—and we must not forget France—dotted over with the places of our meetings, all alike conspicuous by the cordiality of our reception, each specially conspicuous by some special remembrance, as—

“Each garlanded with her peculiar flower,  
Danced into light, and died into the shade.”

The temptation to linger upon these recollections is very strong, but I must not yield to it, because more serious matters claim attention, and because time would not suffice, and because the interest of our members and any other auditors must necessarily be in proportion to the number of meetings they have themselves attended, while the time, alas! slowly but certainly approaches when the first meetings will not be remembered by any one. Yet in a retrospective address it would be impossible to pass without notice the first two meetings of all, for it was by them that the character, since so admirably maintained, was impressed upon the Association. We first met at the London Institution in Finsbury Circus under the auspices of the man who, above all men, has the best right

to be accounted our founder—the present Bodleian Librarian, Mr. Nicholson. Meetings in London, I may say for the information of our northern friends, labour under a serious defect as compared with Aberdeen and other more favoured places—a deficiency in the accessories of sight-seeing and hospitality. Not that Londoners are any less hospitable than other citizens, but there are reasons patent to all why in that enormous metropolis—till lately under such a very anomalous system or no system of municipal government, and where innumerable objects of interest are for the most part common property—entertainments cannot be systematically organised, especially at seasons of the year when unless, under the present dispensation, one is an unpaired member of Parliament, it is almost a reproach to be found in the metropolis. For all that, I scarcely think that any meeting was enjoyed with zest equal to the gathering in that amphitheatre and lecture room, nearly as subdued in light but nowise as cool as a submarine grot. For we were doing then what we could not do afterwards in the majestic hall of King's College, Cambridge, or in the splendid deliberative chamber accorded to us by the liberality of the corporation of Birmingham. We were legislating, we were tracing the lines of the future ; most interesting and important of all, we were proving whether the conception of a Library Association, so attractive on paper, was really a living conception that would work. That this question was so triumphantly answered I have always attributed in great measure

to the presence among us of a choice band of librarians from the United States. These gentlemen knew what we only surmised; they had been accustomed to regard themselves as members of an organised profession; they felt themselves recognised and honoured as such; they had ample experience of congresses and public canvasses and library journals; they were just the men to inspire English librarians, not with the public spirit which they possessed already, but with the *esprit de corps* which, in their then dispersed and unorganised condition, they could not possess. They came to me at least as a revelation; the horizon widened all round, and the life and spirit they infused into the meeting contributed largely to make it the success it was. Had we gone away then with the sensation of failure, it is not likely that I should now be addressing you in Aberdeen or elsewhere. But there was another ordeal to be faced. Critics say that the second book or picture is very commonly decisive of the future of an author or artist whose *début* has been successful—it shows whether he possesses staying power. Well, when next year we came to Oxford, in that sense of the term we did come to stay. The variety and the interest of the papers, and the spirit of the discussions, showed that there existed both ample material for our deliberations and ample interest and ability to render deliberation profitable. Here again we were largely indebted to individuals, and my words will find an echo in all who knew the late Mr. Ernest Chester Thomas, when I say that never did he exhibit his

gifts to such advantage, never did he render such services to the Association, as on this occasion. His courtesy, tact, and good humour all can emulate; the advantages which he enjoyed in finding himself so thoroughly at home could have been shared by any other member of the University; but the peculiar brightness with which he enlivened and irradiated the proceedings was something quite his own. I must not suffer myself to dwell on other gatherings—all equally agreeable, some almost as memorable; but, lest I seem forgetful of a very important branch of the work of the Association, I must briefly allude to the monthly meetings held in London, where so many valuable papers have been read—subsequently made general property by publication in the Journal of the Association, if originally delivered to audiences probably very fit, certainly very few. It is greatly to be regretted that provincial members cannot participate in these gatherings, but this is practically impossible, save by the annihilation of time and space—the modest request, says Pope, of absent lovers.

I shall now proceed to take up some of the more interesting themes broached at the first meeting of the Association, time not allowing me to proceed further, and to remark upon the progress which may appear to have been made in the interval towards accomplishing the objects then indicated. I shall then venture some brief remarks on the library movement at the present day, as concerns public feeling and public sympathy in their effect on the status of librarianship as a profession. My

observations must of course be very desultory and imperfect, for an adequate treatment of these subjects would absorb the entire time of the present meeting. I have also always felt that the President's address, though certainly an indispensable portion of our proceedings, is in one aspect ornamental, and that the real business of a meeting, apart from its legislative and administrative departments, is the reading of papers and the discussion to which these give rise. I hope that these discussions will be, like the Thames, "without o'erflowing, full." Overflow we must not. It will be a great satisfaction to me if, when the meeting is over, it should be found that everything written for it has been heard by it, and that nothing has been "taken as read."

The most important subject introduced at the Conference of 1877 was that of free libraries in small towns, but any remarks which I may offer on this will come more appropriately into a review of the progress which libraries are now making. Next in importance, perhaps, certainly in general interest, were the discussions on cataloguing. In this department I may congratulate the Association on material progress, to which its own labours have, in great measure, contributed. There is much more unanimity than there used to be respecting the principles on which catalogues should be made. Admirable catalogues have been issued, and continue to be kept up by the principal libraries throughout the country, and if now and then some very small and benighted library issues a catalogue

whose *naïvetés* excite derision, such cases are very exceptional. Rules have been promulgated both here and in the United States which have met with general assent, and I do not anticipate that any material departure from them will be made. I only wish to say, as every librarian is naturally supposed to regard his own catalogue as a model, that I do not regard the British Museum Catalogue in this light so far as concerns libraries of average size and type. The requirements of large and small libraries are very different, and that may be quite right in one which would be quite wrong in another. I can, perhaps, scarcely express this difference more accurately than by remarking that while the catalogue of a small, and more especially of a popular, library, should be a finding catalogue, that of a large library representing all departments of literature must be to a great extent a literary catalogue. It is not meant merely to enable the reader to procure his book with the least possible delay, but also to present an epitome of the life-work of every author, and to assist the researches of the literary historian. Hence the explanation and justification of some points which have on specious grounds been objected to in the Museum Catalogue. It has been thought strange, for instance, that anonymous books of which the authorship is known—such as the first editions of the Waverley Novels—should not be entered under the names of the authors. Two excellent reasons may be given : because by so entering the book the character of the catalogue as a bibliographical record would be destroyed ; and

because by entering one description of anonymous books in one way and another in another, there would be an end to the uniformity of rule which is necessary to prevent a very extensive catalogue from getting into confusion. Another instance is the cataloguing of academical transactions and periodicals under the respective heads of Academies and Periodical Publications, which has been much criticised. It is quite true that the *Quarterly Review* can be found more easily under that head than under "Periodical Publications, London," but it is also true that the grouping of all academical and all periodical publications under these two great heads is invaluable to the bibliographer, the literary historian, and the statistician, who must be exceedingly thankful that the information of which they are in quest is presented to them in a concentrated form, instead of having to be sought for through an enormous catalogue. These observations do not in any way apply to libraries of an essentially popular character, and I merely make them by way of enforcing the proposition that the works of such libraries and those of national or university libraries are different, and that we must beware of a cast-iron uniformity of rule. There is yet another intermediate class of library, the comparatively small but highly select, such as college and club libraries, which will probably find it more advantageous to pursue an intermediate course, as I imagine they do, judging from the very excellent specimens of cataloguing for which we are indebted to some of them. And there is yet another class, the libraries



of the collectors of exceedingly rare literatures, such as the Chatsworth Library, Mr. Huth's, and Mr. Locker-Lampson's. In such catalogues minuteness of bibliographical detail is rightly carried to an extent uncalled for in great miscellaneous catalogues like that of the British Museum, and which, it is to be hoped, may never be attempted there, for if it were it would disorganise the establishment. It is not the business of librarians as public servants to provide recondite bibliographical luxuries. These things are excellent, but they lie in the department of specialists and amateurs, who may be expected to cultivate it in the future as they have done in the past. The limits of public and private enterprise must be kept distinct.

Another question of cataloguing which occupied the attention of the Conference of 1877 was the important one of subject catalogues. In this I am able to announce the most satisfactory progress. In the face of the mass of information continually pouring in, the world has become alive to the importance of condensing, distributing, and rendering generally available the information which it possesses already. Three very remarkable achievements of this kind may be noticed. The first is Poole's Index to Periodicals, with its continuation, a work so invaluable that we now wonder how we could have existed without it, but so laborious that we could hardly have hoped to see it exist at all, especially considering that it is an achievement of co-operative cataloguing. In illustration of the want it supplies, I may mention that it has been

found necessary at the British Museum to reproduce the preliminary tables by photography in a number of copies, the originals having been worn to pieces. The next work I shall mention is the subject index to the modern books acquired by the British Museum since 1880—two bulky volumes, prepared in non-official time, with the greatest zeal and devotion, by the superintendent of the Reading Room, Mr. Fortescue, and continued by him to the present time. They are simply invaluable, and it is only to be regretted that they have been issued at too high a price to be generally available to the public. This is not the case with the third publication which I have to mention—the classed catalogue issued by Mr. Swan Sonnenschein, the utility of which is very generally known. A cognate feature of the times is the great comparative attention now paid to indexing, which is sometimes carried to lengths almost ludicrous. The author of a work of information who does not give an index is sure to be called over the coals, and with reason, for how else is the reviewer to pick out the plums unless he actually reads the book? I am not sure that this extreme facilitation of knowledge is in all respects a good thing, but it is at present a necessary thing, and correlated with that prevalence of abridged histories and biographies which it is easy to criticise, but which has at least two good points—the evidence it affords of the existence of a healthy appetite for information among a large reading class, and the fact that information is thus diffused among many to whom

it would have been inaccessible under other circumstances.

Connected with the subject of indexes is that of dictionary catalogues, in which the alphabetical and the subject catalogues are found in a single list. I retain the opinion I have always held, that this plan may answer where the library and the catalogue are not extensive, but that where they are, confusion results; the wood cannot be seen for the trees. I therefore recommend the librarian of even a small library, in planning his catalogue, as well as everything else, to make sure whether his library may not be destined to become a great one. Half the difficulties under which great libraries labour arise from the failure to take from the first a sufficiently generous view of the possibilities and prospects of the institution. With this view of dictionary catalogues, it is not likely that they will be adopted at the British Museum, but I have already explained more than once the facilities which the Museum possesses for forming an unequalled series of subject catalogues by simply, when the great general catalogue has been printed, cutting up copies printed on one side only, and arranging them in a number of indexes. There is no doubt that the Museum can amply provide for its own needs in this manner, and thus remove the reproach under which it has always laboured, and still labours, of having no subject catalogue except Mr. Fortescue's. The question is whether the indexes thus created are to become available for the service of libraries and students

all over the world by being published and circulated. The solution of this question rests with the Government, and I have alluded to it here principally in the hope of eliciting that expression of public opinion without which Government is hardly likely to act. The question will probably become an actual one towards the end of the present century.

Mention of this question naturally leads to another, which occasioned one of the most interesting discussions of the Conference of 1877—the subject of the British Museum in its relation to provincial culture. This was ably introduced by our friend Mr. Axon, who dwelt especially on two points in which provincial culture could be promoted by the Museum—the distribution of duplicates and the printing of the catalogue. On both these I am enabled to announce the most satisfactory progress since they were ventilated in 1877. As regards the distribution of duplicates, indeed, further progress is impossible, for we have distributed all we can spare. The subject was energetically taken up by the present Principal Librarian, Mr. Maunde Thompson, shortly after his accession to office, and the result has been that almost all the principal libraries throughout the country have received important benefactions from the Museum. Libraries of the rank of the Bodleian and the Guildhall have, of course, received the first consideration; but nearly all have had some accession, and in some instances provision has been made for a regular supply of duplicate

parliamentary papers. Since the distribution of these duplicates the opportunity has further presented itself, through the extensive purchases made at the sale of the Hailstone Library, for enriching Yorkshire libraries with duplicate tracts relating to that county, and I am sure that the trustees will readily avail themselves of any subsequent occasions. I am aware that some think that distribution might be carried even further, but I am certain that this is not the case. We are bound in honour not to give any presented books; valuable presented books must be protected by second copies; copyright books cannot be parted with because receipts have been given for them which, if the books disappeared, there would be nothing to justify, while the books and the stamp showing the date of reception may be required for legal purposes; finally, the international copyright which used to provide the Museum with so many duplicates of foreign books has now become utterly extinct in consequence of the Berne Convention. The progress made in the far more important department of the printing of the catalogue is already well known to you. I have been able to give the Association a satisfactory report of progress on two occasions, and I am now able to state that we have entered into letter P. Some important gaps remain to be filled up, but on the other hand the latter part of the catalogue is printed and published from U to the end. If the Treasury continues its aid, I have little doubt that the whole will be published some time before

the end of the century. Mr. Axon certainly did not exaggerate the value which such a publication would possess for general culture, and I am only sorry that it is not as yet properly recognised. Every large town ought to have a copy of the Museum Catalogue, and the supply of the accession parts ought to be regularly kept up. It is too late now to do what might have been done if the importance of the undertaking had been recognised from the first : but the oversight can soon be repaired if the catalogue is reprinted as soon as completed, with the inclusion of all the additional titles that have since grown up. The edition can then be made as large as is necessary to accommodate every important town in the United Kingdom. But this will not be done without the application of considerable pressure to the Government, and this will not come without a much more general interest on the part of the public than there is any reason to suppose exists at present. This might, however, be created by judicious stimulus, which must come in the first instance from librarians, who, though not collectively a highly influential body, have many means of privately influencing persons of weight, and making themselves directly and indirectly heard in the public press.

I will take the opportunity of adding a few words for the honour of a late eminent librarian. In the numerous papers which I have written on the subject of the Museum Catalogue, I have always made a point of bringing forward the inestimable services of the late Principal Librarian, Mr. Edward

Augustus Bond, in relation to it. Everything which I have said I repeat. Without Mr. Bond the catalogue would not now exist in print, or its appearance would at any rate have been indefinitely deferred. In examining, however, non-official papers, I have lately ascertained that Mr. Thomas Watts, one of my predecessors as Keeper of Printed Books, advocated the printing of the catalogue as early as 1855. Like myself, when I recommended printing, not on abstract grounds, but from the impossibility of any longer finding space for the catalogue in the Reading Room, Mr. Watts was led to adopt his view by collateral considerations, which it would take too much time to explain now, but which will be understood when I publish his paper, which I purpose doing. Meanwhile I am glad to have paid this passing tribute to the memory of the most learned and the most widely informed librarian that the Museum or the country ever possessed.

Speaking of the publication of Museum catalogues since the foundation of this Association, I ought not to forget that of the early English books prior to 1640, edited by Mr. Bullen ; or that of the maps, edited by Professor Douglas ; or the various catalogues of Oriental books and manuscripts. The latter, prepared by Dr. Rieu, are treasures of information, very much more than ordinary catalogues.

Another subject was introduced at the Conference of 1877, which admits of wider development than any of those already mentioned, and in which very much

more remains to be done. I allude to the question of the employment of photography as an auxiliary to bibliography, broached by our lamented friend the late Mr. Henry Stevens, in his paper on "Photo-Bibliography." Though the ideas suggested by Mr. Stevens were highly ingenious, they were perhaps better adapted for development by private enterprise than by library organisations. But they led up directly to another matter of much greater importance, which I had myself the honour of bringing before the Dublin Conference—the feasibility of making book-photography national by the creation of a photographic department at the British Museum. I need not repeat at length what was then said by myself and other speakers respecting the immense advantage of providing a ready and cheap means for the reproduction of books in facsimile, by which rare books and perishing manuscripts could be multiplied to any extent ; by which press copies could be provided at a nominal expense for anything that it was desired to reprint ; by which legal documents could be placed beyond the reach of injury, and the vexed question of the custody of parish registers solved for ever ; by which a great system of international exchange could be established for the historical manuscripts of all countries. The one point which cannot be too often repeated or enforced is that the essence of the scheme consists in the abolition of the private photographer, at present an inevitable and most useful individual, but who is sadly in the way of larger public interests. So long as a private



profit has to be made, photography cannot be cheap. Transfer this duty to a public officer paid by a public salary, and the chief element of expense has disappeared; while the slight expense of this salary and cost of material, if it is thought worth while to insist upon its repayment, will be repaid over and over by a trifling charge imposed upon the public. Our Association took the matter up, but nothing tangible has as yet resulted from its efforts, nor can much be fairly expected. We are not a body adapted for public agitation, nor can we be; we have too little influence as individuals; as a corporation we are too dispersed; our general meetings are necessarily infrequent; we want organisation and momentum. Nevertheless, very important progress in this direction may be recorded, or I should not have been able to include it in my address. It is due to the University of Oxford, which has established a photographic department in connection with the Bodleian Library and the University Press, which has shown the practicability of the undertaking, and has already rendered important services to private persons and public institutions, the British Museum among the latter. We are as yet far from the ideal, for the University must of necessity make a higher charge than would be requisite in a Government department, which might indeed be but nominal. But an important step has been taken, and Oxford will always have the honour of having taken the lead in the systematic application of photography to library purposes, as the sister University has

that of having been the first, not merely to print a catalogue but to keep a catalogue up in print.

Another subject which naturally attracted the attention of the Association from the first was that of binding. There are few matters of more consequence, and the increasing degeneracy of the bindings of ordinary books, as issued by the publishers, renders it of more importance to librarians than ever. This deterioration is, of course, likely to extend to books bound for libraries, if librarians are not very vigilant. I was amused the other day with the remark of an American librarian, that he bound his newspapers in brown. I thought he exercised a wise discretion, for the newspapers which were bound in green at the Museum have become brown, like the withered leaf, and might as well have been so from the first. I do not know that any important progress has been made in ordinary binding, although our American friends, in their *Library Journal*, are continually giving us ingenious hints which may prove very useful. The buckram recommended by Mr. Nicholson has, I think, maintained its ground; we use it to some extent at the Museum, and are well satisfied. Goat-skin also has been recently employed; it is a beautiful binding, but liable to injury when a volume is subjected to much wear and tear—a point which should always be carefully considered before the binding of a book is decided upon. The better descriptions of cloth seem to be improved, and very recommendable for books in moderate use.

I am continually struck with the excellence of the vellum bindings we get from abroad, especially of old books, and wish very much that means could be found of cheapening this most excellent material. In one very important description of binding—roan and sheepskin—I fear we are going back ; not from any fault of the binders, but from the conditions of modern life. I am informed that owing to the early age at which the lives of sheep are now prematurely terminated, it is impossible to obtain sheepskin of the soundness requisite for binding purposes, and that books for which it is used must be expected to wear out much sooner than formerly. It is also said, however, that this does not apply to the sheep slaughtered in Australia and New Zealand, and if this is the case it may be worth the while of librarians and bookbinders to enter into communication with the farmers of those parts, through the medium of the Colonial Agents General or otherwise.

Any positive progress that can be reported in binding rather relates to the study, appreciation, and reproduction of old and precious bindings, especially of foreign countries, and is mainly summed up in the record of the exhibitions of bindings which have been held here, the literary labours of Miss Prideaux and others, the numerous splendid reproductions in chromo-lithography, published or to be published here or abroad, and the tasteful designs of Mr. Zaehnsdorf, Mr. Cobden-Sanderson, and other artists in this branch, which I am glad to see encouraged by the Arts and Crafts

Exhibition. The very deterioration of the bindings for the many, to which I have had occasion to refer, stimulates the production of choice bindings for the few. Liberal patronage will not be wanting, and there is no reason why we should not have among us now Bedfords, Roger Paynes, and even craftsmen of a more purely artistic type. Among the signs of the times in this respect is to be noted the establishment of the Grolier Club at New York, celebrated for the admirable examples it has collected, and the interest and value of its publications.

There is another subject which came before the Conference of 1877, which, but for our American friends, I should be unable to include in my survey without infringing my principle of touching upon those subjects alone in which substantial progress can be reported. It is that of co-operative cataloguing, the subject of a note by M. Depping, and indirectly of the late Mr. Cornelius Walford's paper on a general catalogue of English literature. The success of Poole's Index has proved that co-operative cataloguing, or at least indexing, is feasible. I doubt if there is another instance, except one—a work of great national importance, whose long condition of suspended animation and eventual successful prosecution eloquently evince under what conditions co-operation is practicable or impracticable. This is Dr. Murray's great English dictionary, originally a project of the Philological Society. Until Dr. Murray was invented, the Philological Society could do nothing. The scheme absolutely

required some one of competent ability who would go into it heart and soul, sacrifice everything else to it, and devote his whole time to it. When such a man was found in Dr. Murray it is astonishing how soon willing co-workers abounded, and how readily the mass of unorganised material already collected was got into shape. So it will be, I believe, with all co-operative schemes. They will require a head, a single directing mind. Whether this will be forthcoming for the very useful work projected by the Association, the completion of the British Museum Catalogue of early English printed books by the preparation of a supplementary catalogue of such of these books as are not in the Museum, is to me problematical, but time will show. I am, for my part, of opinion that the undertaking had better be delayed until the publication of the second edition of the Museum Catalogue, which it is intended to issue as soon as the printing of the general catalogue is complete, as this would considerably abridge the labour of preparing the supplement. I have already, in the paper read at Paris last year, expressed my opinion that the Museum Catalogue, when complete, will afford the only practicable basis for the far more important and extensive undertaking of a universal catalogue. Success in such an undertaking would indeed be the triumph of successful co-operation, but when the enormous difficulties of establishing co-operation among the libraries, not of a single country only, but of the whole civilised world,

are considered, the difficulty may well appear insuperable, until the various countries shall have approximated much more nearly to the condition of a single country than they have done as yet. Such, however, is the unquestionable tendency of the times, depending upon causes which, so far as can be foreseen, appear likely to operate with augmented intensity, and this movement may proceed far enough to eventually bring with it the universal catalogue along with the universal language, the universal coin, and the universal stamp. Till within a short time ago I had reason to believe that a co-operative catalogue, which I myself proposed several years ago, was on the point of being undertaken. Some may remember that I once read a paper at a London monthly meeting on the preparation of an index of subjects to the Royal Society's catalogue of scientific papers, without which that great store of information is in a measure useless. This paper was re-published in *Nature*, the idea was taken up by Mr. Collins of Edgbaston, the compiler of the indexes to Herbert Spencer's works, and a few weeks ago success seemed about to crown his efforts. I now learn with regret that the scientific men who met in conclave on the project have not been able to agree, and I suppose it will remain in abeyance until some Hercules-Littré arises and does it by himself.

Want of time precludes me from dwelling at length upon any other subjects than those brought forward at the first Conference of our Association.

A brief enumeration, however, of some of the additional subjects discussed at ensuing meetings, to within the ten years immediately preceding our last meeting, will be serviceable as showing the extent of its activity, and, did time permit, it would be possible to show that satisfactory progress has been made in many of the directions indicated. At Oxford, in 1878, besides recurring to many of the themes previously treated, the Conference discussed the condition of cathedral and provincial libraries, printing and printers in provincial towns, size-notation, and, most interesting of all, the salaries of librarians. At Manchester, in 1883, it considered the consolidation and amendment of the Public Libraries Acts, the grouping of populous places for library purposes, the free library in the connection which it has or should have with the Board School, the extent to which novels should be permitted in free libraries, and security against fire. In 1880, at Edinburgh, the libraries of Scotland, and early printing in Scotland, were the subjects of valuable communications, as were press and shelf notation; copyrights, the disposal of duplicates, and the subject which may be said to lie at the root of all the rest, "The Librarian and his Work." In 1881, at London, besides important subjects previously discussed, we heard of law libraries and library buildings. In 1882, at Cambridge, a meeting ever to be remembered for the hospitality and kindness of our distinguished and lamented President—Henry Bradshaw—the Association heard for the first time of progress actually made in printing the

British Museum Catalogue, and papers were read on the all-important subject of librarianship as a profession ; on the work of the nineteenth-century librarian for the librarian of the twentieth ; on public documents and their supply to public libraries ; on local bibliography ; on the cataloguing of periodicals and academical publications ; and on electric lighting.

Here I suspend my survey, but I think quite enough has been said to indicate the number and importance of the subjects taken up by the Association, while the present condition of some of them, compared with that which they held before they had become subjects of public discussion, proves that the Association's labours have not been in vain in the past, and the rapid development of library work on all sides proves equally that there need be no apprehension of the failure of material for its discussions in the future.

I may fitly conclude my address with some notice of this decided increase of interest in libraries, especially as it relates to free libraries ; of the effect which it may be expected to produce upon the status of our profession, and of the claims encouraged and the duties imposed in consequence. Before coming to this division of my subject, however, I ought, as this address is mainly retrospective, to record briefly some exceedingly gratifying occurrences which the historian of libraries will have to note. First among them I place two munificent benefactions—Mr. Carnegie's gift of fifty thousand pounds to the people of Edinburgh towards the



formation of a public library, and Mrs. Rylands' establishment of the Spencer Library, worth probably nearly a quarter of a million, in the city of Manchester. The first is an instance of that public spirit not unknown here, but I fear less known than in the United States, which in that country frequently takes the form of library donation or endowment, but here seldom enters that channel except when a generous employer, like Mr. Brunner of Northwich, builds a library mainly for his work-people. The second instance is almost unprecedented. Donations of money for library purposes are not infrequent, but that a public benefactor like Mrs. Rylands should purchase a famous library at an enormous expense only to make it a public library immediately afterwards, and should moreover take upon herself the entire cost of the requisite buildings, and provide it with a staff and funds for its further extension, are indeed an unprecedented series of occurrences. I need not say that had Mrs. Rylands purchased Lord Spencer's Library solely for herself, we should still have been under deep obligation to her for preventing the books from going out of the country. As it is, she has not only laid Britain under infinite obligation, but I hope will prove to have in the long run raised the standard of bibliographical research throughout the country, both by bringing together so many bibliographical treasures, and by her eminently judicious choice of a librarian. In this connection I may pass on to another event of moment—the recent foundation of a Bibliographical Society through the untiring

exertions of Mr. Copinger. It is very gratifying to find that the constituents of such a society exist in a country where exact bibliography has been so little cultivated, and there can be no doubt of the extent and interest of the field which is open to such a body.

The spread of a taste for bibliography is further illustrated by the fact that an enterprising publisher has found it worth while to produce a series of bibliographical manuals under the able editorship of Mr. Alfred Pollard, and that these have amply repaid him. I may further notice the recent appearance of two works of great importance to English bibliography : Professor Arber's transcripts of the registers of the Stationers' Company, now on the point of completion, and the supplement to Allibone's Dictionary of English Authors. Two great advances in library construction also call for a word of recognition ; the introduction of the sliding press at the British Museum, which indefinitely adjourns the ever-pressing question of additional space both in this and in every other library to which it can be adapted ; and the general employment of the electric light, which insures libraries against the worst enemy of all. While touching on library construction, I must briefly allude to a very remarkable recent publication, the article "Bibliotheca" in the German Cyclopædia of Architecture. This exhaustive disquisition is illustrated with a number of views of libraries in all parts of the world ; not merely of their plans and elevations, their stately saloons and commodious

reading rooms, but of the most humble details of library furniture. It ought to be translated.<sup>1</sup>

I have now to offer some concluding observations on the present prospects of the library movement, as it affects our country and ourselves. In both points of view there is, I think, much matter for congratulation. We have progressed very decidedly since the period to which I have been carrying you back in retrospect. As is often the case, the foundation of this Association was both a symptom and a cause. It indicated the existence of a feeling that libraries had not hitherto occupied that position in public esteem which they ought to have ; it further powerfully contributed to secure this due position for them. I think they are obtaining it. We cannot but be conscious of a wave of public feeling slowly rising, the action of which is visible in the establishment of new libraries, in the adoption of the Free Libraries Act by communities which had long resisted it, in improved library buildings and appliances, in acts of munificence like Mr. Carnegie's and Mrs. Rylands's, and as a natural consequence, in the improved salaries and status of librarians. I am aware that very much remains to be done in this latter respect. No one can more earnestly desire that the librarian's position were better than it is. It would not only be a boon to the individual, but a sign full of hope for the community. We are progressing, but we must progress much further. The key of the position seems to me the

<sup>1</sup> It has since been used in Mr. Burgoyne's volume on Library Architecture.

restrictions imposed upon rates for library purposes. If we could obtain more freedom for the ratepayers in this respect, and, which would be much more difficult, persuade them to use it when they had it, our free libraries might be in general what some of the more favoured actually are. It is discouraging indeed to observe in a not very wealthy community, when all necessary expenses have been met, including the librarian's very inadequate salary, what a ridiculous trifle remains for the acquisition of books.

There is only one way to obtain the desired end—to convince the public that they are getting value for their money. The utility of the public library must be visible to all men. It must be recognised as an indispensable element of culture, and it must be shown, which is unfortunately more difficult, that it is actually subserving this end, not only for a few persons here and there, but for a considerable proportion of the population. I am not opposing the admission of fiction into public libraries, but it is evident that if fiction constitutes the larger portion of the literature in request, the average ratepayer will not think, nor ought he to think, that any case has been made out for his inserting his hands more deeply into his pockets. I am quite aware, of course, that librarians individually can do but little in this direction. Whatever can be done should be done, for the entire case of the librarian in claiming respect from the community and the material advantages concatenated therewith is that he is, in however humble a

measure, a priest of literature and science; as truly, though not as ostensibly, a public instructor as if he occupied the chair of a professor. Let him endeavour to live up to this character, and in proportion as the community itself becomes conscious of its shortcomings and its needs, the librarian's estimation will rise and his position improve. We need not despair; like Wordsworth's imprisoned patriot, "we have great allies." The library movement itself is merely the fringe of a great intellectual upheaval, most visibly personified in the School Boards which now cover the country, but also obvious in many other directions. This upheaval will elevate libraries along with it, if they really are the instruments of intellectual culture we firmly believe them to be. Let us ally ourselves with those concerned in the diffusion of these educational agencies. Many of them feel, I know, that schools ought to be the highway to something better, and that even if public school instruction could be accepted as sufficient for the citizen, much of it is inevitably lost from the divorce from all intellectual life which too commonly supervenes when the boy leaves school. But, if the school have but instilled a love of reading, the library steps in to take its place:—

"Chalice to bright wine  
Which else had sunk into the thirsty earth."

Let the librarian but recognise his true position, and eventually he must find his true level. I do not think that librarians as a body are chargeable

with insensibility to their duties in this respect; but it does need to be kept before their fellow-citizens, whose ideas of the profession—derived from tradition, and from personal experience among some of its inferior branches—are naturally different from those which obtain among ourselves. The librarian will therefore do well to interest himself in useful and philanthropic movements, avoiding, of course, anything tinged with party spirit, political or religious. If he is a vegetarian, or a theosophist, or anything that begins with *anti*, let him be so unobtrusively.

I must not conclude without mentioning an incident connected with our profession, which has recently given me great pleasure—the acquaintance I was enabled to make with the students of the Library School, mostly young assistants in provincial libraries, on their visit to London last summer. I received a most favourable impression of their modesty, intelligence, eagerness to learn, and general interest in their calling. This bodes well for the librarians of the future. I trust that they and all of us, and all whom the profession may receive into their ranks from other sources, will labour to preserve that high ideal of the librarian as a minister of culture, and no less that other possession, which our Association—if it did not actually create—has so greatly fostered that it may almost be looked upon as its creation, the feeling of fellowship and *esprit de corps*. We do not meet merely to read papers and exchange ideas, and provide for our administrative arrangements, but

to encourage and renovate something "better than all treasures that in books are found"—the consciousness of mutual interest, and the feeling of mutual regard, which will, I trust, be found reflected in the harmony and business-like conduct of our present meeting.

## PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND THEIR CATALOGUES<sup>1</sup>

"AT the laundress's at the Hole in the Wall, Cursitor's Alley, up three pairs of stairs, the author of my Church History—you may also speak to the gentleman who lies by him in the flock bed—my index-maker." Thus Mr. Edmund Curll, *apud* Dean Swift, and the direction certainly does not convey an exalted idea of the social status of the gentleman who shared the hole of the ecclesiastical historian.

It is gratifying to remark the augmented consideration, in our day, of this despised fraternity. There is no omission for which an author of serious pretensions is now more frequently taken to task than that of an index; and if on the one hand it is unsatisfactory that the offence should be so frequent, it is on the other encouraging that its obnoxiousness should be so generally recognised. "Every author," sententiously observes an American sage, "every author should write his own index. Anybody can write the book." Without going quite to this length, very many are disposed to affirm of a book without an index what the Rev. Dr. Folliott, in "Crotchet

<sup>1</sup> *New Quarterly Review*, April 1879.



Castle," affirms of a book without matter for a quotation, namely, that it is no book at all. Now, what Mr. Curll's index-maker was to Mr. Curll, librarians are to the general republic of letters. Every visitor to the Reading Room of the British Museum who is guided by the mere light of nature persists in styling the catalogue "the index": their promotion in public consideration has accordingly kept pace with that of their humbler allies, or rather exceeded it, for if not starting originally from a point quite so depressed, they have attained one much more exalted. The cause, however, is the same in both cases—the enormous increase of knowledge, the need of a rigorous classification of its accumulated stores, and the development of a specialised class of workers to discharge this function. Next to the importance of information existing at all is that of its being garnered, classified, registered, made promptly available for use. A good public library has been aptly compared to a substantial bank, where drafts presented are duly honoured; and librarians, as such, occupy much the same relation to the republic of letters as the commissariat to the rest of the army—their business is not to fight themselves, but to put others into a condition to do it. As a consequence, their collective organisation is much more complete than of yore; and their calling assumes more and more the character of a distinct profession requiring special training, with a distinct tendency to gravitate towards the Civil Service. Time has been when a librarianship was most probably a sinecure, or at best a "Semitic

department," created for the express benefit of desert too angular and abnormal to fit into recognised grooves. Lessing was a typical specimen of this class of librarian, installed at Wolfenbüttel nominally to catalogue books but in reality to write them. This type is now nearly extinct in England, except here and there in one of those colleges which Mr. Bagehot thought existed to prevent people from over-reading themselves, or some cathedral, where the functions of librarian are entrusted to a church dignitary or a church mouse. Elsewhere the professional character of the librarian's pursuits is pretty generally recognised; the need of special training and special qualifications is commonly admitted; and the result has been a general improvement in the status and consideration of librarians, the more satisfactory as it is in no degree due to quackery or self-assertion, but has come about by the mere force of circumstances. It may not be uninteresting briefly to trace the steps by which librarianship has become a recognised profession, and the public library an acknowledged branch of the State service.

"Prior to the year 1835," says Mr. Winter Jones, in his inaugural address before the first Conference of Librarians, "there had been little discussion, if any, about public libraries." In that year—the year of the publication of the epoch-making works of Strauss and De Tocqueville, and of the removal of Copernicus and Galileo from the *Index Expurgatorius*—the complaints of a discharged clerk led,

*more Britannico*, to an inquiry into the state of the British Museum, which would at that time hardly have been granted upon public grounds. From that inquiry dates everything that has since been done. Some not very judicious changes in the administrative machinery of the Museum were the chief ostensible results, but the real service rendered was to create a consciousness in the public mind of the deficiencies of the national library—strengthened no doubt by the contemporaneous disclosures of the condition of the public records. The way was then prepared for the truly great man who assumed office as Keeper of the Printed Books in 1837, and whose evidence had mainly created the impression to which we have referred. To the administration of the British Museum, Sir Anthony Panizzi brought powers that might have governed an Empire. Sir Rowland Hill is not more thoroughly identified with the penny post than Sir A. Panizzi with the improvements which have made the Museum what it is, and not merely those affected immediately by himself, but those which owe, or are yet to owe, their existence to the impulse originally communicated by him. In 1839 the Museum received from Sir A. Panizzi and his assistants its code of rules for the catalogue—the Magna Charta of cataloguing. In 1846 the enormous deficiencies of the Library, as ascertained by prodigious labour on the part of the librarian and his staff, were fairly brought to the knowledge of the nation. In 1849 Sir A. Panizzi's multitudinous reforms were tested and sanctioned by one of the

most competent royal commissions that ever sat, whose report offers at this day a mass of most amusing and instructive reading. We may note in its minutes of evidence, as subsequently in the yet more remarkable instance of President Lincoln, how little able Mr. Carlyle is to recognise his hero when he has got him, and may obtain a new insight into the extraordinary powers of the late Professor De Morgan. In 1857 Sir A. Panizzi's exertions received their visible consummation in the erection of the new Reading Room and its appendages, capable of accommodating a million volumes ; and about the same time his political and social influence raised the Museum grant to an amount capable of filling this space within thirty years. Such an example could not fail to elevate the standard of librarianship all over the country, and it was now to be supplemented by the movement with which the name of Mr. Ewart is chiefly associated. The comparative failure of the Mechanics' Institutes, from which so much had been expected, had led the friends of popular education to take up the subject of free libraries. Mr. Ewart's Act (1850) forms another era in library history, and its operation, while slowly but surely covering the country with libraries supported out of the rates, has tended more than anything else to elevate the profession by making it a branch of the public service, and offering some real, though as yet hardly adequate, inducement to men of ability and culture to follow it. The recent library conferences have shown what an admirable body of public

servants England possesses in these administrators of her free libraries. The next great era in library history dates from 1876, when the practical genius of the Americans led them to perceive the benefit of giving bibliothecal science a visible organisation. The Philadelphia Conference of that year resulted in the foundation of the American Library Association, the prototype of our own. About the same time the *American Library Journal*—now the organ of the library associations of both countries—was established, and the Bureau of Education issued its volume of reports, the most valuable collection, not merely of statistics, but of close and sagacious discussion of library questions, that has yet been produced anywhere. That the American example should have been so promptly imitated in this country is mainly due to Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson, the librarian of the London Institution. Mr. Nicholson conceived the idea of an English conference on the American model. Messrs. Tedder, Harrison, Overall, and other distinguished metropolitan librarians, contributed their time and their marked capacity for business towards carrying it out. Mr. Winter Jones, as Principal Librarian of the British Museum, gave the conference *éclat* by accepting the office of President, and the welcome presence of a strong deputation of American librarians, together with some distinguished representatives of the profession from the Continent, imparted the international character which it alone needed to ensure success. The second conference, held at Oxford, was equally successful, and the

present year is to witness a similar gathering at Manchester. An English Library Association has been called into being, and the *Library Journal*, the organ of this Association, equally with the American, indicates and records the active development of library science in both countries. One thought clearly underlies all these various undertakings—that library administration actually is a science and a department of the public service, and that it is only by these matters being thus generally regarded that the librarian can render full service to the public, or the public full justice to the librarian.

We now propose to offer a few observations on some of the points of principal national concern connected with the administration of libraries in general, and, as from this point of view is inevitable, of the national library in particular. In so doing we must acknowledge our special obligations to the following works, and recommend them to the study of all interested in library subjects: 1. The Transactions and Proceedings of the Conference of Librarians held in London, October 1877, edited by E. B. Nicholson and H. R. Tedder: Chiswick Press. 2. The *Library Journal*, official organ of the Library Associations of America and of the United Kingdom: Trübner. 3. Public Libraries in the United States of America; Special Report. Washington: Bureau of Education. To these may be added Mr. Axon's able article on the Public Libraries of America in the last number of the "Companion to the Almanac."

It might seem that not much could be said respecting the mere purchase of books, but even this department is subject to the general law of specialisation, and the character of a collection must vary as it falls within the category of national, academical, or municipal libraries. The mission of the national library is the simplest: its character is determined for it by the enactment which in most civilised states constitutes it the general receptacle of the national literature, good, bad, and indifferent, and imposes the corresponding obligation of rendering itself the epitome of foreign literatures, as far as its means allow. Every such library is the mirror of its time, and perhaps even its services to contemporaries are of less real account than those which it performs for posterity in preserving the image of the past. This is the apology of the librarian's anxiety to collect what the uninitiated regard as trash. Yesterday's news-sheet, waste paper to-day, will be precious after a century, and invaluable after a millennium. The same principle justifies the heavy expenditure which it is frequently necessary to occur in procuring what is truly illustrative of the history of a life or a nation, even when it comes in the costly shape of a bibliographical rarity. A black-letter ballad on a Smithfield martyrdom, a collection of cuttings illustrating Byron or Dickens, must be secured for the national Museum if at all within the compass of its resources. Hardly as much can be said for another class of rarities—the vellum page or the sumptuous binding which makes a volume a work of art, but adds

nothing to the value or significance of its contents. Such luxuries, the darlings of the genuine bibliographer, the tests of his professional taste and the *chevaux de bataille* of his collection, are nevertheless only to be indulged in by a conscientious man when he is certain that such an indulgence is compatible with the ends for which national libraries exist. Even the ideal of rendering the library a representative of the thought and knowledge of the age must either be moderated, or pursued at the risk of incurring comparatively expenditure. A new periodical gives pause : it must be taken, like a wife, for better or worse ; for once commenced it can seldom be dropped. New editions of scientific works occasion much perplexity : it is equally vexatious to be behind hand with the latest results of discovery, and to spend money over something which is certain to be soon superseded by something better still. In such cases compromise alone is possible, and compromise can never be quite satisfactory. Such difficulties press less heavily on the curators of academical libraries, where the demand for universality is not preferred, and even an accidental circumstance may legitimately impart a bias to the entire collection. The acquisition of Professor De Morgan's books, for instance, has made it imperative upon the University of London to be always strong in logic and mathematics, at all events. The principle of specialisation, indeed, admits of being carried very far in a large community, where it is possible to conceive groups of libraries working in different directions to a



common end, and mutually completing each other. Such a system was supposed to have been inaugurated at Oxford, although we have only heard of two colleges which are actually working it out—Worcester, with its deliberate and most laudable bent towards classical archæology; and All Souls', whose noble collection of law books might, if law were more scientifically taught in this country, contribute to make Oxford a great school of jurisprudence. Some of the other college libraries, it is to be feared, justify the philippic which Mr. Ernest Thomas, at the Oxford Conference, clenched with this climax of scornful reference to a flagrant case, "The librarian receives only ten pounds a year, and I am sorry to say that even that is too much."

The municipal librarian has his peculiar difficulties. His means are seldom large, and out of them he has frequently to provide for branch libraries, involving numerous duplicates. He has to study not only what his public wants, but what it thinks it wants; not only to make ready for guests, but to "compel them to come in." This raises the difficult question how far the taste for fiction should be condescended to in free libraries. We cannot agree with those who think that public money may be properly expended upon trashy novels, in the chimerical hope that the appetite for reading they will probably create may be devoted to worthier objects. It is far more likely to destroy any latent capacity for serious reading which a more judicious treatment might possibly have

called forth. At the same time, the adverse experience of mechanics' institutes has shown that it will not answer to be too austere in such matters, and indeed the man who is capable of relishing Thackeray or George Eliot is not far from the kingdom of culture. Other novelists of a less purely intellectual cast may awaken the love or stimulate the pursuit of knowledge. Scott indirectly teaches not a little history, Marryat not a little geography; either might provoke a craving for further information, and both are adapted to keep the mind in a state of healthy curiosity, susceptible of new impressions and ideas. The municipal librarian will also consider the especial circumstances of his locality. Leeds, we understand, collects everything relating to the history or processes of the woollen manufacture, and the example will no doubt be generally followed. One of the most useful suggestions made at the Librarians' Conference was that provincial librarians should make a point of collecting publications printed in their own districts, as well as the municipal documents which are rarely deposited in the British Museum. It met with a cordial response, and we believe is being extensively carried out.

Due provision having been made for replenishing the library with the books most appropriate to its circumstances, the question of the catalogue next presents itself. The controversies which used to prevail on this point may be regarded as in a great measure laid to rest. The rules of

cataloguing, framed in 1839 by Sir A. Panizzi, Mr. Winter Jones, and their staff, will, we believe, be now generally accepted by bibliographers as embodying the principles of sound cataloguing.<sup>1</sup> They may not be equally satisfactory to the general public, with its preference for rough and ready methods; a very short experience, however, will convince any man that such methods in cataloguing mean simply hopeless confusion, and that it is far better that a book should be now and then hidden away than that entire categories of books should be entered at random, with no endeavour at principle or uniformity. On the part of almost all qualified bibliographers, the Museum Catalogue receives the sincerest form of flattery—imitation: the few points still debated, such as whether anonymous books with no proper name on the title-page should be entered under the first substantive or the first word, are not material; and the impediments sometimes experienced in consulting it arise from no defect in its cataloguing rules, but from the great difficulty in digesting such long and complicated articles as Academies into a perspicuous and logical arrangement. The problem is no longer one of cataloguing, but of classification, and in this department ample room remains for discussion and scientific progress. The question of the strictly classified catalogue

<sup>1</sup> A revised edition of these rules, substantially the same in principle, but different in wording and arrangement, was prepared in the Department of Printed Books in 1895, and printed privately in the following year.

*versus* the strictly alphabetical, may, indeed, be considered as decided. The former method may have answered in the library of Alexandria; but the multiplicity of the departments of knowledge in our own day, their intricacy and the nicety with which they blend and shade into each other, render cataloguing solely by subjects a delusion. A catalogue of books on any special subject must either be imperfect, or must contain a large number of entries repeated from other catalogues; while, in any case, the reader can never satisfy himself without a tedious search that the book he has at first failed to find is not after all actually in the library. If, nevertheless, a subject catalogue without a general alphabetical arrangement is often useless, it must be admitted that an alphabetical catalogue without a subject index is not always useful. It is somewhat humiliating for the librarian unprovided with this valuable auxiliary, to find himself dependent upon the classified indexes to the London publishers' list and Brunet's *Manuel du Libraire* for information which he ought to be able to supply from his own catalogue. Even the Bodleian, we perceive, is about taking measures to prepare an index of subjects, and the Bodleian is a library for scholars who might not unfairly be expected to bring their bibliographical information along with them. The need must evidently be more imperative in libraries which assume a distinctly educational function, and in those which, like the national and most municipal collections, are supported at the expense of the learned and

the ignorant alike. The recognition of the want, however, imposes an additional strain upon the resources of the institution, which the British Museum, at all events, over-burdened as it is already, cannot encounter without a considerable addition to its resources. The question of classification is, moreover, most difficult of solution. Only two points seem universally agreed upon: that the best subject index must be far from perfect, and that the worst is far better than none. Two principal methods are proposed for adoption. The first is the simple and obvious one of recataloguing every book entered in the Alphabetical Catalogue in the briefest possible form, and breaking up these titles into sections, according to subject, the alphabetical order being still preserved in each. Thus Simson's "History of the Gipsies" would be found in the General Catalogue entered at length, and again in an abridged form in a special index of books relating to the Gipsies, which would refer the reader to the General Catalogue. The other system is the so-called Dictionary Catalogue, which combines the main entry and the subject entry in the same alphabetical series. In such a catalogue Simson's book would be entered twice over, under Simson and under Gipsies; while Paspatis' "Dictionary of the Dialect of the Turkish Gipsies," if the librarian were as accommodating as some of his fraternity, would stand a chance of being catalogued four times over, under Paspatis, Gipsies, Turkey, and Dictionaries. This system, first

brought forward by Mr. Crestadoro, the very able librarian of the Manchester Free Library, and retouched by Messrs. Jewett, Abbott, and Noyes, in the United States, has been thoroughly discussed in Mr. Cutter's masterly contribution to the American report on public libraries. Mr. Cutter, on the whole, supports the plan, whose defects he has nevertheless stated with his usual force and candour. The principal objections are the great bulk of a catalogue constructed upon such a plan, and the sacrifices of one of the principal advantages of an alphabetical classed index, the congregation of a great number of minor subjects into a grand whole. In such an index, for example, works on the liberty of the subject, Bankruptcy, Divorce, though formed into special lists, would still be found together within the covers of the same comprehensive volume on law, and, taken all together, would afford a general view of whatever existed in print upon that grand division of human knowledge. In the Dictionary Catalogue, where authors and subjects are thrown together in the same alphabetical series, this advantage would be lost; Bankruptcy would be in one part of the catalogue, Divorce in another, and a general view of the entire body of legal literature would not be available at all. The inconvenient bulk of a Dictionary Catalogue (except in the case of small libraries, and any small library may one day become a large one), would be owing to the necessity for multiplying cross-references. To take Mr. Cutter's own illustration, a treatise "On the

Abolition of the Death Penalty" must be entered along with other books referring to the subject under the head of "Capital Punishment." The average reader, however, will not think of looking for it there. He will turn to "Death" or under "Penalty," and, not finding the book under either heading, will conclude that it does not exist in the library. Two cross-references to "Capital Punishment" must accordingly be made for his accommodation; and, after a few generations of literary industry, the catalogue, like the proverbial wood, would be invisible on account of the entries, generally speaking; the cardinal error of plans for dictionary catalogues appears to us to be an excessive deference to the claims of the average reader. Nothing can be more natural, considering that these plans originated in Manchester and were perfected in the United States, where the educational character is much more distinctly impressed upon libraries than in England, and where the appetite for knowledge is as yet in advance of the standard of culture. It is fortunate when the librarian is able to consider not merely what may be most acceptable to a miscellaneous body of constituents, but also what is intrinsically fit and reasonable.

We must hold, then, that the alphabetical index of subjects should be the auxiliary and complement of the Alphabetical Catalogue, not a part of it; that each book should be entered in it, as in the catalogue, once and once only; that the minor indexes should be grouped together so as to form

collectively a whole (*e.g.* ornithology and ichthyology, as sub-sections of zoology); and that the operations of cataloguing and indexing should go on *pari passu*. If this is attended to for the future, the future will take care of itself; but "not Heaven itself upon the past has power," and it is discouraging to think upon the immense leeway which remains to be made up in most of our great public libraries. The experience of the Bodleian will be very valuable, and we must confess to much curiosity to see how long the operation of classifying its multifarious contents will take. In the British Museum the foundation of a classed catalogue has already been laid by a simple process. As fast as the titles have been transcribed for insertion in the three copies of the catalogue by a manifold writer, a fourth copy has been taken, and this copy is arranged in the order of the books on the shelves. As the various subjects are kept together in the library, such an arrangement is practically equivalent to a rough classed catalogue, which could be digested into order with comparative facility. The publication of such a classified index, reduced to the utmost possible brevity, offers, as it seems to us, the best solution of the vexed question of the publication of the Museum Catalogue. On this point much remains to be said. Meanwhile, before quitting the subject of cataloguing methods, a tribute is due to Mr. Cutter's important contribution to the subject, in his rules for his Dictionary Catalogue. Next after the settlement of the Museum



rules in 1839, these form the most important epoch in the history of cataloguing. Agreeing with the latter rules in the main, and when differing, generally, as we must think, not differing for the better, they nevertheless contain a most valuable body of acute reasoning and apt illustration, which it did not fall within the province of the Museum authorities to provide; they bring unusual experience and ability to bear upon the intricate subject of classification, and are further reinforced by most ingenious remarks on the economy and manipulation of print, making the mere variations of type instructive.

Assuming the catalogue to be completed, the question remains for decision whether it shall be printed. In most cases this question is easily determined with reference to the circumstances of the individual library; but in one instance the nation claims a voice in the matter. It is hardly necessary to say that we refer to the Catalogue of the British Museum, the theme of forty years' controversy. Every one will admit the intrinsic superiority of a catalogue in print over a catalogue in MS. The question is, whether the advantage may not be bought too dear. To form a sound opinion on this point it is necessary to have an approximate estimate of the extent of the Museum Catalogue, and of the expenditure and the time involved in the undertaking to print it. Some statistics may accordingly be useful. The printed volume of the catalogue containing letter A,

published in 1841, has about 20,000 entries. It forms about a twentieth part of the catalogue as it now exists, which would accordingly comprise about 2,000,000 entries, in about 100 folio volumes. In addition, however, to these titles now existing in the catalogue, there are about 200,000 titles and cross-references awaiting final revision, and which, unless the present state of this revision is very considerably accelerated, will not be ready for several years. During all this period, titles for new acquisitions will keep pouring in at the rate of 40,000 per annum. All the time that the catalogue is at press, somewhere between a decade and a generation, they will continue to pour in, and will have to be included as far as possible. We must consequently expect to have to deal with from 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 titles, occupying from 150 to 200 volumes folio. It is clear that no private individual could afford either to purchase or to store such a catalogue. It would, therefore, only be useful to such institutions as might buy it or receive it as a gift. Unlike the newspapers we have mentioned, its usefulness would diminish in the ratio of its antiquity, and it could only be kept up to the mark by a succession of supplements. The total cost of providing it, minus these supplements, may be roughly estimated at £100,000. We scarcely think that Government will incur such an expenditure for such a purpose.

We should ourselves have little hesitation in pronouncing it undesirable to print the Museum

Catalogue as it stands, merely for the convenience of the public. It is quite another question whether a recourse to print may not be desirable in the interests of the Museum itself, and from this point of view the answer must be widely different. It is desirable, and will shortly become imperative. The reason is prosaic, but unanswerable : the MS. catalogue cannot be much longer accommodated in the Reading Room. Partly from necessity, partly from oversights, the Museum Catalogue is most extravagant in the matter of space. To preserve the alphabetical order of the entries, the titles are necessarily movable, pasted, therefore, on each side of the catalogue leaf, thus trebling the thickness of the latter. It is equally indispensable that wide spaces should be left between the entries when a volume is first laid down, and that when these become insufficient from the number of additions, as is continually happening, the overcharged volume should be divided into three or four. These inconveniences are unavoidable. It can only be regretted that part of the available space of every slip is lost in transcription ; that scarcely a single transcriber appears to have studied the art of packing ; and that the catalogue is overrun with practically duplicate entries of slightly differing editions, transcribed at full length while they might have been expressed in a single line. From all these causes the Museum Catalogue is rapidly becoming unmanageable, and the time is approaching when the Reading Room will contain it no longer. Something might no doubt be done

to postpone the evil day by excluding the map and music catalogues from the room; but apart from its inconvenience, such a measure is obviously a mere temporary palliative and ultimate aggravation of a difficulty which acquires strength not *eundo*, but by standing still. The bulk of the catalogue must be reduced, and we are not aware that any method has been suggested, or exists, except a recourse to print. It is unfortunate that this purely administrative measure, founded on no preference for print over manuscript as such, but the simple dictate of an economic necessity, should be so constantly confounded with the totally different proposition to print and publish the catalogue like any other book, on the expense and inutility of which we have already commented. Publication is not in question: it is simply for the authorities to consider whether the bulk of the MS. catalogue will not some day shut out the public from access to it; and if this is found to be the case to lose no time in averting the evil. We do not believe that the present Principal Librarian, or his predecessor, entertains any doubt upon the subject; the ultimate decision, however, rests neither with the Principal Librarian nor the Trustees, but with the Treasury. From the Treasury's point of view, it is to be observed that the present system is financially justifiable only on condition of its being persisted in to the end of time. If a resort to print will one day be compulsory, existing arrangements are the climax of inconsiderate wastefulness. That transcribing is cheaper than

printing may be admitted, though it has hardly been demonstrated. But to print is manifestly cheaper than to print and transcribe also. Yet this is just what the Museum is doing if the catalogue is ever to be printed at all. There are about 250,000 titles for the new catalogue still remaining to be transcribed. To transcribe these at the present rate of progression would occupy about fifteen years, but let us say ten. During this period titles for new acquisitions would be coming in at the rate of 40,000 a year. These would also be transcribed. The total number of transcripts would thus be 650,000. Now it seems to be seriously contemplated by the advocates of a complete printed catalogue that all this enormous mass of careful copy shall in a few years be completely superseded by print, and rendered absolutely useless. After paying, let us say, threepence a slip to do its work, the nation is to pay fourpence a slip more to undo it, and is to be charged altogether twice as much as it need have been if it had known what it wanted from the first. It is, indeed, high time for the representatives of the nation in these matters to determine once and for ever whether the catalogue is to be in print or manuscript. If MS., let the idea of print be authoritatively discountenanced; but if print, let the ruinous system be abandoned of paying highly for work performed only to be undone.

The solution of these perplexities will be found, we think, in a strict adherence to the principle that

administrative arrangements must primarily have respect to the advantage of the institution, which will in the long run prove to be the advantage of the public. The Museum is not bound to undertake the publication of an enormous printed catalogue merely for the convenience of persons at a distance; but it will introduce print in so far as print tends to economise its own funds, and to obviate confusion and encumbrance in its own rooms. The two vital points are to stop the waste incurred by transcribing what must ultimately be printed, and to put an effectual check upon the portentous growth of the catalogue. The first object may be attained by simply resorting to print for the future, and pasting the printed slips into the catalogue as the MS. slips are pasted now. The second can best be accomplished by tolerating the mixture of printed and MS. slips in each volume of the catalogue, until the volume has arrived from constant accessions at such a bulk as to require breaking up, then printing the MS. entries in that volume, and profiting by the economy in space of print over MS. to rearrange the contents in double columns, which would afford room for additions for an indefinite period. In this manner the cost of printing would be spread over a long series of years, and the catalogue would insensibly be transformed into a printed one by much the same process as that by which Sir John Cutler's worsted stockings became silk. Any requisite number of printed slips might be produced, and

offered by subscription to public institutions and private individuals. The former might thus in process of time acquire the whole catalogue without any violent strain upon their resources; the latter might procure what they wanted without being compelled to take what they did not want. It would at the same time be beneficial to the Museum and to literature, if some of the most important articles were printed entire and brought out as soon as possible for the sake of relieving the pressure upon the catalogue. Such articles as Bible, Shakespeare, Luther, Homer, embracing nearly complete bibliographies of the respective subjects, would probably command a fair sale, and effect something towards diminishing the inevitable cost of print.

The formation of a subject index to the Alphabetical Catalogue is a matter of much less urgency to the Museum itself, but one of even greater importance to the public. It could not be undertaken without special assistance from the State, but would probably repay its cost in a great degree, and has in any event the very strongest claims upon the support of an enlightened government. It is moreover much less formidable than appears at first sight. We have already explained how the way for a more exact classification has been prepared by arranging one copy of the catalogue in the order of the shelves. The apparent magnitude of the task is further diminished by the following considerations: 1. It requires no cross-references. 2. Titles may be abbreviated to the utmost. 3. It

can be temporarily suspended upon the completion of any section. 4. The section of biography is classified already, merely requiring the cross-references from the subjects of biographies to be brought together ; and several other extensive sections need not be classified at all. Nobody, at least nobody worth taking into account, wants catalogues of the titles of novels, plays, and sermons. Classified lists of some other subjects, on the other hand, would be of inestimable value, and there is one which, in the interests of the Museum itself, should be undertaken without delay. Among the inconveniences attending the ill-considered removal of the Natural History collections to South Kensington—a measure forced on by the Government against the wish of the working Trustees of the Museum—is the injury likely to be inflicted upon them from want of access to a library. Naturalists cannot study without books any more than without specimens ; but the Government which gratuitously created the want seems in no hurry to supply it. The principle of a grant appears indeed to be admitted ; but at the rate at which this grant seems likely to be doled out, English Natural Science will be placed at a serious disadvantage for many years. Something may possibly be done by transferring duplicates from Bloomsbury (a question, however, not to be decided in haste), and some anonymous writers in scientific journals have modestly suggested that all books on Natural History might go to Kensington ; so that a student of the physiology of colour, for example, would have to read his Wallace at one



end of the town and his Tyndall at the other. We should, however, just as soon expect Parliament to decree on similar grounds the cutting of the zoological articles out of the encyclopædias as to enact that the national library of England should be the only professedly imperfect library in the world. Indeed the argument cuts two ways, for if it is fair that the mineral department should have Cresconius Corippus to illustrate its gems, it must be equally fair that the library should have the mineralogist's gems to illustrate its Cresconius Corippus. Until then, the Natural History departments can acquire a library of their own, it must be desirable for them to possess a catalogue of everything relating to their subjects extant in the British Museum. An abridged list, classified according to subject, might be speedily furnished if Government would provide the compilers, and would be an invaluable boon to the scientific world at large, abroad quite as much as in England. Scientific authorities, of course, would be consulted respecting the principles of classification, and we may take this opportunity of repeating that while probably no subject-index has been or can be free from inconsistency and ambiguity, none has ever been too bad to be useful. That a high degree of excellence is attainable is shown by Messrs. Low & Marston's alphabet of subjects to the London Catalogue. The meritorious compiler, we should suppose, can hardly have seen all the books he indexes; yet, so far as we are aware, he has only committed one positive error, the

very pardonable one of enumerating Mr. Gosse's "On Viol and Flute" among works on musical instruments.

In connection with the subject of classification, reference should be made to the excellent classified catalogue of manuscripts prepared by the present Principal Librarian when keeper of the MS. department. It is not yet printed or entirely complete, but is sufficiently advanced to be exceedingly serviceable. Like most of Mr. Bond's reforms, it has been achieved so quietly and unostentatiously, with no help from paragraphic puffery, that few know of it except those whom it actually concerns. The scholar goes to the Museum with no expectation of finding any such aid to his pursuits, and hardly realises the boon until he finds himself profiting by it. A perfect contrast in every point of view is afforded by the remarkable proposal emanating from the Society of Arts that the Museum should make and publish a catalogue of English books before 1641, or just the period when books were beginning to be useful. The project bespeaks a very imperfect appreciation of the needs of the institution and the public. When the great problem of the Museum is to diminish the pressure on its space, it is proposed to afflict it with yet another catalogue. When the public is crying out for classified lists as aids to knowledge, it is offered an alphabetical list with no attempt at classification, and containing nothing worth classifying. When libraries are becoming more and more valuable in proportion as they subserve educational purposes,

it is proposed to employ money and labour in telling a few specialists what they already know. When the overworked library is unable to discharge some of its most obvious duties, it is proposed to detach not a little of its best strength for an utter superfluity. Not only are new books to remain uncatalogued, but even the final revision of the old books is to be delayed indefinitely, that what has been already catalogued may be catalogued again.<sup>1</sup> The project would hardly demand discussion, but for the possibility that it may after all be forced upon the Museum, notwithstanding its repugnance to the common-sense of the late and the present Principal Librarian. If ridicule could kill, it could hardly have survived the discussion which arose among its advocates at the late Oxford Conference. Those external to the Museum suggested that the Museum should catalogue not only the old English books it possessed, but also those it did not possess. The Museum representatives, enamoured with the project as they were, pleaded that it would be unreasonable to expect them to describe what they had never seen. The other side concurred, but represented in turn that a catalogue of such English books only as happened to be in a particular library would be very imperfect, and of very little use. Having thus mutually demonstrated the

<sup>1</sup> The line was drawn here to eliminate the Thomason tracts, a special catalogue of which would be really valuable: just as in "Erewhon," the date of operation of the retrospective enactment prohibiting machinery was fixed in the middle of the fifteenth century, in order to include a certain mangle.

unreasonableness of the proposal from one point of view, and its inutility from another, they agreed that it should by all means be persevered with, and went home.

The subject of the classification of books within the library itself—a matter of even more importance to the librarian than the preparation of classified lists—has received a great impulse from the ingenious system contrived by the principal editor of the *Library Journal*, Mr. Melvil Dewey. Mr. Dewey—a remarkable instance of the combination of disinterested enthusiasm with thorough business capacity—is devoted to several other causes beside the causes of libraries, and among these is the cause of the decimal system. His experience in the latter field has given him the idea of dividing the departments of human knowledge decimally. His scheme provides for a thousand divisions. Every tenth number embraces some important section of knowledge, and the following nine as many subsections or allied subjects admitting of classification under the principal head. Thus number 500 might represent mathematics in general, and 501 conic sections, analytical geometry, or any other branch of the general subject. Further subdivisions, if needed, would be made by appending letters to these numerals, as 501*a*, 501*b*. Each book would be numbered in the order of its accession to the library, and receive its place upon the shelves accordingly, so that there never would be any doubt as to the press-mark or position of a book that had once been properly classed. Our space does not

permit us to dwell upon many other points connected with the working of this ingenious scheme, which, if inapplicable to the great old libraries whose catalogues, like the Abbé Vertot's *siege*, are already done, deserves the most careful consideration on the part of the founders of new institutions. It must, as the inventor admits, receive some modification in practice from the impossibility of accommodating books of all sizes upon the same shelf; it is only to be feared that these and similar necessary condescensions to the prosaic exigencies of space might in process of time throw it out of gear altogether. Space is the librarian's capital enemy, and the more cruel as it turns his own weapons against himself. The more ample the catalogue, the more liberal the expenditure, the more comprehensive the classification, the greater, sooner or later, are the difficulties from lack of space. It is not too early to direct the earnest attention of the public to the question of the accommodation of the national library. The pressure upon its capacity, now merely beginning to be felt, will soon become serious. It cannot from the nature of the case be divided or dispersed; books required by readers must be within reach of the Reading Room, or they might as well be nowhere. If the library does not receive its fair share of the space about to be vacated by the Natural History departments, the consequence will most assuredly be, first some years of confusion and deadlock as regards all new acquisitions, and then a large expenditure, superfluous with better management, upon new

buildings, whose space will be mortgaged before they are completed. It does not seem to us very difficult to devise means for economising the existing space to the utmost, and reconciling the interests of all the departments concerned—but we must not be seduced into a disquisition upon architecture.<sup>1</sup>

Free libraries and public reading-rooms are among the most important departments of library administration in our day, and constitute the most distinct expression of the growing conviction that the librarian is called upon to be a great popular educator. This sentiment has attained its fullest development in the United States, where the great free libraries have taken a most important place among national institutions. Not merely are such cities as Chicago and Cincinnati provided with libraries of which any city might be proud, but the custodians have in many instances gone beyond the strict limits of professional duty by not merely furnishing reading for the people, but instructing the people what to read. "They have tried," says Mr. Axon in the paper cited already, "and with no small measure of success, to lead readers to higher levels of intellectual interest, and to help all students to the fullest acquaintance with the capabilities of the library." There are no more remarkable examples of popular bibliography than the various catalogues and helps published by the Boston Public Library. These sheets, prepared by Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Within a few years the difficulty was solved by the introduction of the sliding-press, the subject of another paper in this volume.

Justin Winsor, have been continued at Harvard since the indefatigable editor's removal thither as professor of bibliography. They include lists of the most important books in all departments of literature, with a selection of the notices of the press best adapted to explain their purport. Special bibliographies of great value are frequently interspersed, and when it is considered that the whole is rather a labour of love than of duty on Professor Winsor's part, his diligence and acumen will appear not more worthy of praise than his disinterested zeal. It might be well for the directors of English free libraries to consider whether something similar could not be produced by co-operation. The list of scientific books recommended to students at the Radcliffe Library, Oxford, is most useful and creditable as far as it goes. Generally speaking, the condition of free public libraries in England may be considered satisfactory; among the directors are many men not merely of administrative quality, but of high bibliographical attainments. The principal obstacles to their usefulness may be briefly characterised as the popular and municipal parsimony. Of the former we have spoken; the latter requires to be dealt with tenderly, and is not equally applicable to every locality; it is nevertheless the fact that in many towns the allotted grant is insufficient to maintain the library and librarian together. Nowhere is the cause of free libraries so backward as in London, although the Guildhall library is an honour to the city. The other metropolitan districts, notwithstanding, continue

deaf to Mr. Nicholson's earnest expostulations; and although the number of readers at the British Museum is as large as that institution can well deal with, it seems small in comparison with the vastness of the metropolis and the occasions for reference to books which continually arise in the daily life of even the least lettered members of the community. The suggested opening at night by the aid of the electric light would almost certainly attract a new and valuable class of students, at present virtually excluded. It would be premature to say much about the recent experiments with the electric lamp; but we believe it may be stated that they have been highly encouraging as far as they have gone, and that the question is safe in the hands of Mr. Bond, to whom the public are already indebted for so many signal improvements.<sup>1</sup> Should the experiments result in perfect success, it is to be hoped that their object will not be frustrated by the propensity of all governments to save where they ought to spend, that they may spend where they ought to save. To allow the infinitesimal risk of accident to the institution to obstruct the full development of its usefulness would indeed be *propter vitam vivendi perdere causas*.

We have left ourselves no space for any observations upon the circumstances of libraries on the Continent, although there is ample evidence both

<sup>1</sup> It is almost needless to remark that soon after these lines were printed the electric light was in successful operation at the Reading Room.



of the activity of librarians and the public recognition of their functions in France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. Nor can we remark at length, as we gladly should have done, upon the tendency of the peculiar circumstances of the United States to develop a most valuable type of librarian, destined to exert more and more influence in Europe as libraries become more and more the possession of the people at large. Every advance in general knowledge tends to make them so, and the whole movement towards improvement in library administration—some only of whose features we have imperfectly striven to indicate—rests on the more or less conscious perception of librarians that the growth of human knowledge necessitates a strict classification with a view to facility of reference; that this important function devolves to a considerable extent upon them; and that, to qualify themselves for its discharge, they must begin by perfecting their own systems.

NOTE.—The advocacy of printing in this essay may appear somewhat undecided, and the tone towards the catalogue of the early English books altogether unjustifiable. The former peculiarity is explained by the writer's uncertainty what turn the negotiations with the Treasury for the introduction of printing might take, and his dread of compromising the plans of Sir Edward Bond, who knew nothing of the article until it was in type, when he read it, and returned it without remark. (See also pp. 75, 76, of this volume.) The observations respecting the early English catalogue were dictated by no hostility towards that undertaking in the abstract, but by indignation at the largeness of

the staff employed upon a non-essential, while the final revision of the catalogue, the indispensable preliminary to a complete printed catalogue, was so languidly prosecuted that it seemed in danger of coming to a standstill. So matters continued until 1882, when the decided interference of the Principal Librarian, and the adoption of a suggestion tendered by the present writer, brought the final revision to a speedy completion, and removed the principal objection to the English catalogue.

## THE PRINTING OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM CATALOGUE<sup>1</sup>

THE subject of my paper is one which has for many years attracted a large share of attention from the world of letters. It formed a topic of discussion at the first meeting of this Association ; when few anticipated within how short a period it would be possible to state that not merely was a printed catalogue of books already in the Museum in progress, but that the titles of all books received were also printed, and issued in the form of an Accession Catalogue. Having already had the honour of giving some account of the latter department of the undertaking to the Conference at Manchester, I shall on the present occasion confine myself principally to the printed catalogue of books actually in the Library. I propose to offer a brief retrospect of what has been done during the half-century over which the discussions respecting the Museum Catalogue have extended ; to indicate with corresponding brevity what is doing now ; to answer some natural inquiries by anticipation ; and, finally, having shown, I trust, that the Museum is performing its part, to appeal for the national support

<sup>1</sup> Read before the Library Association, Cambridge, Sept. 1882.

requisite to expedite the progress of this truly national undertaking. Though compelled to withhold much illustrative matter of great interest, I cannot forbear to remark upon the signal fitness of such a theme being brought forward for discussion in the halls of the University of Cambridge, whose library has, I believe, the honour of being the first to demonstrate the practicability, not merely of printing a catalogue, but of keeping a catalogue up in print. Three particulars will, I think, clearly appear from this brief retrospect. That the initiation of the British Museum Catalogue was the act of the Trustees of the British Museum themselves. That, having prematurely commenced the publication of an imperfect catalogue, they acted wisely and rightly in suspending it until it could be resumed with effect. That, acting under the guidance of Mr. Bond, whose name will ever be the name especially connected with the Museum Catalogue in its aspect of a catalogue in print, they have resumed it at the right time, and in the right manner.

I am unable to ascertain that any public demand for a printed catalogue of the Museum Library existed in the year 1834. On April 12 of that year, the Trustees of their own motion called upon Mr. Baber, then keeper of printed books, to report upon the subject. This he did on April 26. On April 30 he attended personally before them, stated his views, and in particular offered the earnest advice to send no portion of the catalogue to press until the whole was ready. During the remainder

of his keepership, and the early portion of that of his successor Mr. Panizzi, the catalogue was the theme of constant communication between these officers and the Trustees. On December 17, 1838, the Trustees announced their determination to commence not merely the compilation but the printing of a catalogue, comprising all books then in the Library, in the following year. Mr. Panizzi, though entirely concurring with Mr. Baber's views as to the inexpediency of going thus prematurely to press, accepted the responsibility imposed upon him by a letter dated the next day. In the spring of 1839 the famous ninety-one rules of cataloguing were framed by him, with the assistance of Messrs. Winter Jones, Watts, Parry, and Edwards. On July 13 these rules were sanctioned by the Trustees, and on August 8 the commencement of the undertaking was formally announced by Mr. Panizzi, in a circular addressed to the whole department. In July 1841, the first, and last, volume of the catalogue was issued to the public. It was an admirable catalogue, reflecting high credit upon all who had taken part in it, especially Mr. Winter Jones, who had exercised a general superintendence, Mr. Bullen, who had prepared the extensive and difficult article Aristotle, and Mr. Rye, who had read the whole in proof. But, although the catalogue continued to be actively prosecuted in manuscript, the Trustees ceased to urge the continuance of the printing, and not another sheet ever went to press.

Whence this abortive result? Mainly because

the entire undertaking was premature. The unfortunate determination to print letter A before the whole catalogue was ready, excluded a considerable portion of letter A itself. As other letters were proceeded with, it was inevitably discovered that numerous books which in the old catalogue had been entered under headings commencing with other letters required to be brought under A, according to the new rules. Cross-references under A were continually springing up, of course too late to be printed. In fact, however, the publication of a printed catalogue at that time was inexpedient for a more weighty reason. The Library was too deficient in most branches of literature to deserve one; and it was not until these deficiencies had been remedied by the unexampled exertions of Mr. Panizzi, that an exact register of its contents could be contemplated with satisfaction.

While discussion respecting the printing of the Museum Catalogue was proceeding, the character of the catalogue itself was undergoing modification. Great additions were daily being made to the number of books. The new entries thus rendered requisite were at first made in the old manuscript catalogue of additions interleaved with the original printed catalogue of Sir Henry Ellis and Mr. Baber. Two alphabetical series of titles, one printed and the other manuscript, were thus comprised within the same volumes. The amalgamation of these two sets of titles, and the consequent absorption of the catalogue commenced in 1839 into a more extensive general catalogue, was effected by the ingenious and

admirable suggestion, made independently in 1849 by Mr. Wilson Croker and Mr. Roy, of the Library, that the entries, instead of being written upon the leaf itself, should be written upon movable slips pasted upon it, so that insertions might be made without any disturbance of alphabetical order. The suggestion was promptly adopted, transcribers were engaged to copy the great mass of accumulated titles, and, all thoughts of printing the catalogue commenced in 1839 being laid aside for the present, the titles prepared for it were also transcribed and incorporated with those written for the books newly acquired. In 1851 this new catalogue, transcribed fourfold by the "carbonic" process, and with copious space provided for insertions and interleavings, was placed in the Reading Room in 150 volumes, or about as many as are now occupied by letter B alone. The catalogue of 1839 and the supplementary catalogue were thus put into a fair way to become one, and it became obvious that printing must be deferred until the amalgamation was complete. It was still, however, a fair question whether the catalogue might not be kept up in print; whether it was better to transcribe titles fourfold as we did then, or to multiply them indefinitely by print as we do now. I cannot find that the practicability of keeping up a continually augmenting catalogue in print was seriously considered, until, in October 1861, it was proved by the introduction of print into the University Library of Cambridge. Some years afterwards the system was strongly pressed upon

the attention of the Museum by the Treasury, which had remarked the gradual and inevitable increase of expenditure in binding, breaking up, interleaving and relaying the volumes of the manuscript catalogue, increased by this time from 150 to 1500. I well remember the pains which Mr. Rye, then keeper of the printed books, took in investigating the subject, and I believe I may say that had it depended upon him, the transition to print would have been effected immediately. Other views, however, prevailed for the time ; and when, in October 1875, the subject was again brought forward by the Treasury, it fell to my lot to treat it from a new point of view, suggested by my observations in my capacity as superintendent of the Reading Room. I saw that, waiving the question as to the advantage or disadvantage of print in the abstract, it would soon be necessary to resort to it for the sake of economy of space. There were by this time 2000 volumes of manuscript catalogue in the Reading Room, exclusive of the catalogues of maps and music. There would be 3000 by the time that the incorporation of the general and supplementary catalogues was complete. Hundreds of these volumes in the earlier letters of the alphabet were already swollen with entries, and required to be broken up and divided into three. Sooner or later every volume would have undergone this process. By that time there would be 9000 volumes of manuscript catalogue, three times as many as the Reading Room could contain, or the public conveniently consult. The only remedy was to put



a check upon the growth of the catalogue by printing all new entries for the future, and to mature meanwhile a plan for converting the entire catalogue into a printed one. I prepared, at the request of Mr. Bullen, a memorandum embodying these ideas, and entered into the subject more fully when, in January 1878, it was again brought forward by the Treasury. These views, however, did not find acceptance at the time. Mr. Winter Jones, and Mr. Newton, acting on the latter occasion as deputy Principal Librarian, were, indeed, both theoretically in favour of print ; but it was thought that the desired financial economy, the only point on which the Treasury laid any stress, could be better obtained by the employment of Civil Service writers. The question was thus left for Mr. Bond, who became Principal Librarian in the following August. As keeper of the manuscripts, Mr. Bond's attention had never been officially drawn to the catalogue of printed books, but, as a man of letters, he had formed an opinion respecting it ; and I am able to state that he came to the Principal Librarianship as determined to bestow the boon of print upon the catalogue and the public, as to effect the other great reforms that have signalised his administration. From the moment of his accession the question may be said to have been virtually decided. In April 1879, I published an article in the *New Quarterly Magazine*, foreshadowing almost everything that has since been accomplished. In the summer of the same year, Mr. Bond, having secured the concurrence of the Trustees, proposed to the

Treasury to substitute print for transcription in the case of all additions henceforth made to the catalogue, a proposal which the Treasury could not refuse to entertain, as it had originally come from itself. It was accordingly accepted ; the details of the scheme were settled by Mr. Bond in concert with Mr. Bullen and the assistant keepers ; the general supervision of the printing was entrusted to my colleague Professor Douglas ; and by the beginning of the new year the press was fully at work. We had thus successfully introduced print into the catalogue, and by diminishing the size of the entries checked the enormous pressure upon our space which threatened to swamp the catalogue altogether. We had also, by providing for the issue of the new printed titles in parts at regular intervals, enabled any subscriber to obtain a complete list of future additions to the Museum. But this related to the future only ; nothing had yet been done to meet the public demand for a printed catalogue of all books already in the Library. The satisfaction of this demand was the second item in Mr. Bond's programme. In recommending his proposal to the Treasury, he relied upon the same grounds that had been shown to exist in the case of the Accession Catalogue. He pointed out the enormous number of manuscript volumes, the ponderous unwieldiness of many among them, the expense of perpetual breaking up, rebinding, and relaying ; the manifest advantage of compressing many volumes into one, and providing space for additions for a practically indefinite period.

On these grounds, and not on literary grounds, the Treasury assented to the proposal, and agreed to devote, for as long as they should see fit, a certain annual sum for the gradual conversion of the manuscript into a printed catalogue. It is desirable that this should be thoroughly understood, as it affords the answer to some questions which may very naturally be asked respecting the method of publication adopted for the catalogue. Why is it not brought out at once, complete from A to Z? Because the Treasury have not granted £100,000 for the purpose. They simply make an annual allowance of limited amount, liable to be withdrawn at any time. Might not, however, the allotted sum be employed as far as it will go in printing the catalogue consecutively from the beginning, instead of in selected portions? To this there are several things to be said. The grant is made upon condition that it shall before all things be employed in remedying the defects signalled by ourselves, bringing cumbrous, overgrown volumes into a handy form, and putting a stop to the perpetual rebinding and relaying. The most bulky volumes, therefore, must in general be those selected for printing. An equally powerful consideration is that we thus escape all danger of the reproach that has hitherto attached to almost every similar undertaking, "This man began, and was not able to finish." The funds on which we relied might at any time fail us, and we might never progress beyond our A, B, C. By making the printing a portion of the daily life of the institution, a piece of

administrative routine like cataloguing or binding, we escape alike ambitious professions and ambitious failures. Once more, a strictly alphabetical procedure would destroy one of the most valuable features of the scheme, the separate issue of important special articles, not merely to our limited body of subscribers, but offered on a large scale to the public generally. We have already the article Virgil in the press on this principle, and it is hoped that Bible, Shakespeare, Milton, Homer, Dante, Academies, Periodicals, and others, may ere long be added to the list. Even our ordinary volumes frequently contain articles better printed now than twenty years hence: one of the last completed, for instance, contains the article Gladstone. It would indeed be well if our resources admitted of these three operations being carried on simultaneously, the consecutive publication of the catalogue, the compression of overgrown volumes wherever occurring, the independent issue of important special articles. With sufficient means to defray the additional cost of printing and provide the needful literary revision, all three might very well go on *pari passu*. I hope that the liberality of the Treasury, of which I desire to speak with every acknowledgment, will rise still nearer to the height of the occasion, and I believe it will. It will be seen that, granting the principle of the conversion of the manuscript catalogue into a printed one, there is no economy, but the reverse, in spreading the operation over a long period. The longer it lasts, the greater will be the

accumulation of titles for accessions, to be included in the general catalogue when the volumes to which they belong come to be printed in their turn. Supposing that the whole catalogue could be put into type to-morrow by the stroke of an enchanter's wand, we should have printed three millions of titles. If the metamorphosis were deferred for forty years, we should then print five millions. But if the work of printing goes on during the forty years, as at its present rate of progress it will, we shall have printed and paid for six millions, because half of the two million accession titles will have been printed and paid for twice over, first as accession titles, and again after their incorporation into the general. It is not, however, so much upon such economical considerations that I rely, as upon the conviction that the Government will ultimately recognise our work as a truly national one; to which end the people itself must contribute by a wider and warmer recognition and a more liberal pecuniary support than has as yet been accorded. Before entering further into this department of the subject, I will briefly state what has been effected already, and describe the method of procedure. Of the Accession Catalogue I have already spoken at Manchester, and I have little to add to my observations upon that occasion. The titles written for new acquisitions, instead of being transcribed fourfold, are now sent to the printer as soon as a sufficient number have accumulated. They are divided into three principal sections; new English and foreign books; old English

books; old foreign books. They come back printed in regular alphabetical order, and after the press has been corrected are distributed to subscribers and such institutions as receive them gratuitously. Four copies are cut up, and the titles inserted into the General Catalogue in their proper places, occupying a mere fraction of the room required for the old manuscript entries. The arrangements are under the superintendence of Professor Douglas, and up to the present time about 130,000 entries have passed under his inspection. The publication of the General printed Catalogue proceeds as follows. Three or four volumes of the manuscript catalogue having been selected to be combined in a volume of print, they undergo in the first place a literary revision. Queries respecting headings, authorship, and date are raised and settled, mistranscriptions and wrong punctuation corrected, and the catalogue is weeded of its practically duplicate entries by cutting these down to the mere phrase "another edition; another copy," as the case may require. A second and more troublesome revision then becomes necessary, for the order of the entries frequently admits of great improvement. The titles having been incorporated by a variety of persons, and the process of insertion having now gone on for more than thirty years, many errors and inconsistencies have inevitably crept in, and these require to be rectified by an assistant of especial ability and experience in this department of work, whose researches frequently originate a new set of catalogue queries.

At last, however, the copy goes to press, the proof is promptly returned and corrected (we are content with a single revise), and the three or four bulky volumes of manuscript are condensed into a single handy and portable volume of type, printed in double columns and on ordinary paper for subscribers, but for reading-room use in single column on a strong vellum paper, adapted to bear rough handling, the opposite column being left blank for insertions, and the book supplied with guards to allow of interleaving. There have hitherto been on the average 220 columns or 110 folios to a volume. On the average of twenty entries to a column, which is rather under the mark, this gives 4400 titles to each volume. The blank space left for insertions and the provision for interleaving would allow of this number of titles being quadrupled, but the weight of the paper prescribes a limit which it would be inconvenient to transgress. Supposing that each volume will take 9000 titles only, then, as the Reading Room will accommodate 2000 volumes of catalogue without encroachment on the reference library, sufficient space will have been provided for eighteen millions of titles, or for three centuries' accumulations at the present annual rate of increase. A year or two ago we were at an utter loss how to accommodate less than three million titles. Several volumes are now (September 1882) in hand in various stages of progress. The number fully completed and placed in the Reading Room is twenty-two, which comprise the contents of about 70 manuscript volumes, including, with

many others, all in letter A after the article Aristotle to the end. They have cost, in round figures, £2450, or about £110 each. Arrangements lately completed will diminish this cost by nearly a sixth, and the sum economised will be available for additional printing. It ought to be stated that all the extra work entailed by printing has been performed by the ordinary Museum staff, with no addition to its resources, except an arrangement by which two gentlemen work two or three hours' overtime.

It is of course apparent that if a large portion of the catalogue is to be put within reach of the present generation the scale of operations must be greatly enlarged. We may one day see the whole of the printing of the Museum a special department, like the Clarendon or Cambridge University press, with a head and a staff of its own, and carrying on operations by the side of which those I have been describing will appear diminutive. At present the Museum force and the Museum grant are nicely adapted to each other. With a stronger staff we could easily spend much more money, with a weaker staff we could not spend what we do. Every effort is of course made to expend the full amount within the year, not only that it may not return unused into the Exchequer, but, from consideration to the just claims of our printers, who have engaged a number of extra hands whom they cannot afford to keep idle. Hence, as I have stated, we are content with a single revise, and deliberately prefer systematic energy to minute accuracy. Misprints and other



oversights will, no doubt, be detected, which a more deliberate procedure would have obviated. I do not desire to have the air of apologising for a catalogue which, even if tried by a severe standard, will, I am persuaded, be pronounced a creditable work; but I wish it to be understood that these blemishes, as well as some defects of arrangement manifested in long sets of cross-references, are not unknown or overlooked. They will diminish as the work proceeds; confident, meanwhile, of a generous construction, we are deliberately of opinion that it is infinitely better to run the risk of letting them pass than to open a door to the capital enemy of all good administration—arrear. Other shortcomings are necessitated by the fact that the Museum Library is not an inert mass, but a living organism. You have not to deal with a closed collection of books like the King's Library, whose authors are dead, and to which no addition can ever be made. The very titles before you have been prepared during the last forty years by twice forty persons of various idiosyncrasies, whose work, with every care, it is often no easy matter to harmonise. While the product of their heterogeneous authorship is at press, the Accession Catalogue is in progress under independent management; thousands of titles are annually written and entered which will one day have to be amalgamated with the general series, and discrepancies must sometimes occur. Moreover, the catalogue of the world's literature partakes of the mobility of the world itself. Designations are altered, as when successful generals become barons,

or popular churchmen bishops ; anonymous authors are brought to light ; periodicals and works in progress are completed or relinquished ; errors are detected and corrected ; improvements and modifications are introduced. The catalogue of an institution like the British Museum, dealing with a mass of matter already accumulated, and intended to register an ever-accumulating mass of matter for ever and ever, must not aspire to absolute perfection, and can never attain finality.

A few words, in conclusion, upon the duty and interest of the public to support the Museum undertakings, and the practical end at which, as it seems to me, we ought to aim. The catalogue cannot, at the present rate of progress, be completely printed in much less than forty years. We shall all agree that this progress ought to be accelerated, but this can only be by increased liberality from the Treasury. This will be accorded in proportion to the Treasury's conviction of the value of our work, and this conviction will greatly depend upon the appreciation of this usefulness manifested by the public. If we are to do a national work, we must have national recognition. I am not at all using the language of complaint or disappointment. It would be well worth the Museum's while to print the catalogue for its own sake, even if it did not dispose of a single copy ; and in fact the number of subscriptions is very much what was expected. I wish, however, that we could succeed in this, as in some other things, beyond expectation. Something is probably to be ascribed to the peculiarly

quiet manner in which this great change was effected. Mr. Bond's reforms "come not with observation." A question which had been so long and clamorously agitated while unripe was, being ripe, settled in a few conversations, and with a little official correspondence, so noiselessly and unostentatiously, that many of those most interested in the matter have never heard of it. Many who have heard of it are probably under the impression that the original high terms of subscription have been maintained. This is not so. All the sections of the Accession Catalogue are now issued for an annual subscription of £3; and all volumes of the General Catalogue for an annual subscription of £3, 10s. This does not bring it within the reach of every purse: still there must be many students and men of letters in easy circumstances who would find it well worth their while to secure on such terms a register of the literature of the world. Our late lamented friend and colleague, Professor Jevons, was a type of the class I have in my mind; and I know that on the eve of his death he had determined to become a subscriber. From another point of view it may be urged that to support the Museum Catalogue is to take a long step towards the attainment of the still grander object of a Universal Catalogue. At present a Universal Catalogue is a Utopian Catalogue. I have the greatest respect for those who have advocated it as an undertaking immediately practicable. I have no doubt that the twentieth century will speak of them as men before their age. But they *are* before it.

Their project is at present intricate, indefinite, intangible. They want a base of operations. As Sir Henry Cole himself discerned when he made his not altogether fortunate experiment of printing a specimen article from the Museum Catalogue, this catalogue supplies such a base. Let us know clearly what is in it and what is not; let whatever it contains be put clearly before the world in type; and we shall be able to proceed systematically and intelligently to fill up its lacunæ from the catalogues of other libraries, and from the special bibliographies which are increasing and multiplying year by year. In saying "then" I would not foreshadow a date which many of this generation may not hope to see. My aspiration is that the completion of the Museum Catalogue in print may coincide with the completion of the present century. This is an age of anniversary demonstrations. When a great man dies he bequeaths to his country—his centenary. It may be predicted that if the twentieth century finds the world at peace it will be inaugurated with more displays and solemnities than all preceding centuries together. Well, I do not know how we could offer it a more acceptable gift than a register of almost all the really valuable literature of all former centuries. Such a register the British Museum Catalogue, if then completed, would afford; and a precedent would be set for a similar issue every succeeding century, or half or quarter century, as might be found most expedient, which would show at one view what that particular interval of time had effected for mankind in literature.

Evidently, however, the catalogue cannot at the close of this century be absolutely complete as respects the Museum, as a host of accession titles will have been growing up, a great part of which, coming after the volume which would otherwise have included them has been printed, will be too late to be comprised in the general alphabetical series. It may not, perhaps, be too much to hope that the claims of culture upon the State will by that time be sufficiently recognised to induce the Government to bear the cost of reprinting the whole catalogue with these titles, that the literary register may be as complete as possible, and to provide for the regular repetition of the process at definite intervals. If, however, this is not done, there is still another agent that may be invoked. When the Museum shall have adopted Photography as it has adopted Electricity; when it shall possess—and I trust that long ere that period it will possess—a photographic department, an established branch of its organisation in which, the salaries of the staff being defrayed as in other departments by the State, there will be no expense to be considered beyond the mere cost of chemicals, there need be no limit to the reproduction of its treasures. Sculptures, coins, and prints can be disseminated over every hamlet; manuscripts can be multiplied indefinitely and exchanged with foreign libraries for corresponding donations, illustrative of English history and antiquities; foreign and country scholars will be able to consult rare books and unique manuscripts without leaving their arm-chairs; and, above

all, the scattered portions of the nearest approach the world will have made to a Universal Catalogue may be brought together, digested into alphabetical order, and, reproduced in facsimile by this beautiful art—fit mate of Printing in that she too preserves what would else perish, and brings light into many a dark place—be given to the world.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This forecast of the service which photography might render to library catalogues would seem to have been inspired by the very spirit of prophecy. See, in the *American Library Journal* for March 1899, an account by A. J. Rudolph of the success of the Newberry Library, Chicago, "in printing a catalogue of the accessions accumulated in the British Museum since 1880 to date, in one general alphabet by the so-called blue-print process, a method of photo-printing." If the Newberry Library can do this, the British Museum ought to be able to incorporate its accession-titles with the general catalogue, and reissue the latter from time to time, as frequently recommended in this volume, and in a remarkable article in the *Quarterly Review* for October 1898.

## THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM CATALOGUE<sup>1</sup>

THE present and the future of the British Museum Catalogue are so much more important than its past, that this part of our subject must be touched with brevity. Resisting, therefore, every temptation to expatiate upon the desert of ancient cataloguers, further than by the observation that Moses and Homer were of the brotherhood, we begin with June 21, 1759, when the Trustees of the British Museum, which institution had been opened to the public in the preceding January, recorded the following remarkable minute :—

“The Committee think proper to add that the requiring the attendance of the officers during the whole six hours that the Museum is kept open is not a wanton or useless piece of severity, as the two vacant hours (if it is not thought a burden upon the officers) might very usefully be employed by them in better ranging the several collections ; especially in the Department of Manuscripts, and preparing catalogues for publication, which last the Committee think so necessary a work that till it is

<sup>1</sup> *Universal Review*, October 1888.

performed the several collections can be but imperfectly useful to the public."

From this we learn that the officers of the Museum had at that primitive period of its history but two hours to spare from conducting visitors over the building; that the Committee rather expected to be censured for requiring any other duty from them; and that, though the Trustees themselves thought catalogues useful and even necessary, there were those who deemed otherwise. The Museum Library dispensed with a printed catalogue until 1787, when one was issued in two volumes folio, the work of three persons, two-thirds of whose time was otherwise occupied. It would therefore be unjust as well as unbecoming to criticise its many defects with asperity. The compilers seem to have adopted as their principle that the cataloguer who looks beyond the title-page is lost. They therefore enter "The London Prodigal" and "Mucedorus" under Shakespeare with no impertinent scepticism as to the authorship; bewilder themselves with no nice distinctions between the William Bedloe who wrote against Mahometanism in 1615, and the William Bedloe who swore away the lives of Roman Catholics in 1680; and achieve their crowning glory by cataloguing the thirty-three thousand Civil War tracts at a stroke under "Anglia" as "a large collection of pamphlets." If they had tried to do more they would probably have done nothing. Their list, meagre in every sense, and at the present day less interesting for what it contains than for what it does not contain,



served for twenty years, when a beginning was made towards superseding it by the more elaborate performance of Sir Henry Ellis and Mr. Baber. This catalogue, commenced in 1807, was completed in 1819. The portion executed by Sir Henry Ellis has been severely criticised. It was certainly unfortunate that *pastor paganus* should have been treated as the equivalent of *sacerdos ethnicus*, and Emanuel Prince of Peace mistaken for Emanuel King of Portugal. Its virtue, however, of portable brevity, has rendered it so useful a substitute for its colossal successor on those not unfrequent occasions when the wood could not be seen for the trees, that those thus beholden to it will be little inclined to deal hardly with its notorious errors and deficiencies.

Ellis and Baber's catalogue had scarcely been completed ere the need of a new one began to be felt, partly on account of the magnificent donation of the 60,000 volumes and 20,000 pamphlets of the King's Library. Notions of classification were then in the ascendant, and in 1826 the Rev. T. Hartwell Horne, a bibliographer famed for strict method and plodding industry, was engaged as a temporary assistant to carry them out ; together with Mr. (afterwards Sir Frederic) Madden, Mr. Tidd Pratt, and other persons of literary ability. Seldom has an undertaking so extensive left so little trace behind it. Mr. Horne's assistants ascended to higher spheres, or evaporated entirely, and when called upon in 1834 to report the progress of the previous year, he could only state that he had personally

arranged the classes of "chemical and medical philosophy"; the latter, indeed, under twenty divisions, with such subdivisions as "Treatises on Plethora," "Treatises on the Vis Medicatrix Naturæ," "Use of Flagellation, Friction and Philtres." The list may be commended to the study of those who think classification a simple matter, or a classed catalogue serviceable otherwise than as an index to an alphabetical one. Seven thousand pounds had been expended upon the simple sorting of titles, a task merely preliminary to that of printing them, which might be considered as at least nearly half done, if only the influx of new titles could be stopped, which was impossible. The Trustees wisely determined to throw no more good money after bad; and the episode of classification came to an end in July 1834. Mr. Baber, Keeper of Printed Books, had already proposed a plan for a new printed catalogue, to be executed under the superintendence of a single competent person, a description denoting Panizzi, then "an extra assistant librarian." This scheme was set aside in favour of a far inferior plan, by which the execution of the catalogue was entrusted to four persons of very unequal degrees of capacity, virtually independent of each other. The consequence was that the little they did required to be done again. Panizzi became head of the Printed Book Department in 1837, and the long discussions which ensued between him and the Trustees resulted eventually in the ninety-one famous rules which have since formed the foundation of scientific cataloguing

drawn up by him with the assistance of Messrs. Winter Jones, Watts, Parry, and Edwards. Their number has afforded a theme for much good-natured and ill-natured satire; on examination, however, it will be found that a third of them relate merely to arrangement, and that the remainder are far from providing for all conceivable cases. It may be granted that their complexity was incompatible with the Trustees' desire to produce a printed catalogue at an early date, a desire in which their officer was far from participating. The Trustees defeated their own object, partly by allowing the catalogue to be commenced on so extensive a scale; partly by requiring, or rather letting themselves be thought to have required, that it should be actually printed, instead of merely ready for press, by December 1844. This decision necessitated printing in alphabetical succession, hence diverting much of the force which should have been applied to compiling the catalogue, to the correction of the press. It further condemned the work to inevitable imperfection, since it was impossible to foresee what titles would be required to be written under A, and such titles, excluded from the printed volume embracing that letter, kept continually turning up during the entire progress of the work. As the imperfections of this volume (published in 1841) became more notorious, the demand for a printed catalogue gradually died away, and Panizzi was left in possession of his ideal—a manuscript catalogue, executed with a thoroughness and on a scale which seemed to

render printing for ever impossible. This, as we shall see, was destined to break down in its turn; and the great librarian's objections to print have met with a practical refutation. At the same time it must be candidly acknowledged that, although Panizzi was wrong in abstract principle, he was right as regarded the requirements of his own day. The collection of books was at the time too limited to justify a printed catalogue, and not too extensive to render a manuscript catalogue inconveniently unwieldy. Panizzi's opposition to print was justifiable under the circumstances then existing; his error was in failing to foresee and provide for the far different state of things which he himself was calling into existence. If, while maintaining the old order, he had recognised and promoted the inevitable advent of the new, he would not have left the renown of the introduction of print to a young officer of the Manuscript Department, who, during the heat of the strife over the question of print in 1848, was, as Sir Frederic Madden informed the Royal Commission, "employed in seeing through the press the general index to the Manuscript catalogues in the Reading Room. And I must say that Mr. Bond has proved a most efficient and most praiseworthy assistant."

Panizzi wanted a catalogue: he had framed the rules for it with completeness and precision never imagined before his time, but he was entirely averse to the catalogue being printed. In his report of November 17, 1837, he declared it unreasonable to expect that the public should spend the enormous

sum that the printing of a catalogue of the whole of such a library requires, to suit the convenience of a small portion of the community. There was much weight in the argument, and the propounder of it could not foresee that he would himself in the long run overthrow it by the extraordinary development he was destined to impart to the library, and by consequence to the catalogue. When, eight years after the date of the report just quoted, Panizzi's persevering efforts obtained an annual grant of £10,000 to remedy the deficiencies of the library, he started the catalogue on a road whose inevitable goal was print. Library and catalogue increasing *pari passu*, it became abundantly clear that recourse must some day be had to print for the mere sake of reducing the bulk of the latter. This consummation was accelerated by another of Panizzi's great measures—the introduction, at the independent and almost simultaneous suggestion of Mr. Wilson Croker and the late Mr. Roy, of the Library, of the system of keeping up the catalogue by slips pasted on the leaf, and therefore easily removable, thus preventing the disturbance of alphabetical order. As this gave three thicknesses to the leaf, and the slips were at first pasted widely apart, and were not, moreover, transcribed with any special regard to economy of space, the hundred and fifty volumes placed in the Reading Room in 1850 had swollen to fifteen times that number by 1875. This development was attended by another unforeseen consequence; it became actually more expensive to

transcribe the catalogue than to print it. The number of transcribers employed to copy titles, of incorporators required to assign these to their proper places, of binders' men to perform the manual work, the incessant shifting and relaying, inserting new leaves and dividing and rebinding old volumes, were attended by financial results which frequently elicited communications from the Treasury. One of these happened to arrive in 1875, shortly after the writer of these pages had become Superintendent of the Reading Room. Being now in a position to report upon the subject, he pointed out what had long been exceedingly plain to him, that the space available for the accommodation of the catalogue was all but exhausted, and that on this ground alone it would be imperative to reduce its bulk by printing at least a portion of it. In 1878 his representations were renewed, this time with great encouragement from Sir Charles Newton, then acting as Principal Librarian, but nothing decisive was done until the accession of the late Principal Librarian, Mr. E. A. Bond, in the autumn of the same year. Mr. Bond had long made up his mind, on literary grounds, that the catalogue ought to be printed; and finding himself now enabled to give effect to his views, initiated negotiations with the Treasury which led in due course to the desired result. In 1880 print was adopted for the entries of all future additions to the library, thus putting an effectual curb upon the growth of the catalogue. In 1881 the printing of the catalogue as a whole was

commenced, and has since been carried on uninterruptedly. The order of publication was not at first alphabetical, the Treasury's support having been partly gained by the promise to deal, in the first instance, with the overgrown volumes in various parts of the catalogue which would otherwise have required rebinding and relaying. This accomplished, however, publication, as had always been Mr. Bond's intention, glided into as close an alphabetical sequence as is consistent with the fact that different portions of the same letter are necessarily taken up simultaneously, and that some are much more difficult to prepare for press than others. With the adoption of print the history of the Museum Catalogue may be said to terminate for the present, while its actual condition will appear from the statement now to be given of the progress hitherto made.

By the time that these pages see the light about 190 parts or volumes of the catalogue will have been issued. Averaging the number of entries as 5000 to a volume (notwithstanding that the volumes have of late been made thicker), it will appear that 950,000 titles have been printed, or nearly one-third of the entire work, allowing for the constant accession of new material during its progress, as will be explained further on. This gives an average of about twenty-four parts annually since the commencement of printing in 1881; but as the amount of the Treasury grant did not admit of the publication of more than fifteen parts annually for the first two years, the average publication at present may be taken as thirty.

Speaking generally, it may be said that the catalogue is in type from A to the end of G, and from V to the end of the alphabet. This is nearly a third of the whole, and at the present rate of progress it seems reasonable to conclude that the printing may be completed in about twelve years. It should be hardly necessary to explain to the reader who may be familiar with the appearance of the catalogue in the Reading Room, that the ponderous folio he is accustomed to there presents little resemblance to the parts as issued to subscribers. Special copies of the latter, printed on one side of the paper only, are laid down for Reading Room use on considerably larger sheets of the strongest and toughest vellum paper procurable, and thus the quartos are converted into folios. The printed strip when pasted down occupies only the left side of the leaf, the blank portion opposite, as well as that above and below, being reserved for the additions continually accruing from the titles of new books received after the printing of the volume,<sup>1</sup> which is further supplied with guards to allow of interleaving. It has been computed that each volume would contain 9000 titles, after which it must be divided, and that the Reading Room will accommodate 2000 volumes, providing room for eighteen millions of titles, or, at the present rate of cataloguing, for the accumulation of three centuries to come. In 1880, just before the

<sup>1</sup> Soon after this was printed, three columns instead of one were left blank, as the writer had recommended from the first.



introduction of printing, there was not room to place another volume. A column of the type used in printing the catalogue weighs ten pounds, so that supposing the work, when through the press, to consist of 600 volumes averaging 250 columns each, a million and a half pounds' weight of type will have been employed.

From the preparation of the catalogue for strictly Museum purposes, we pass to the arrangements for its issue to the public. Here we are confronted by two very remarkable facts—one as gratifying as the other is the reverse. For the *original subscribers* the Museum Catalogue is one of the cheapest books in the world. At its commencement it was not expected that more than fifteen parts could be issued annually, and the annual subscription was fixed at three pounds. In fact, however, the rate of publication has for some years past averaged thirty parts, while the terms of subscription remain unaltered. The subscription is, therefore, virtually reduced by one-half, and the cost of each part, with its 250 columns and 5000 titles, is just two shillings. It may be doubted whether equal liberality has ever been shown by any public institution. The case, however, of the subscribers of the future is far otherwise, or rather say would be, if such subscribers could exist. Nobody will take an imperfect catalogue, and the sum required for the parts already printed is an almost insuperable obstacle in the way of new subscribers, and an effectual bar to the further dissemination of the catalogue, except by donation. It would be well

worth while to offer the parts already printed as a bonus, at a nominal or greatly reduced price. Unfortunately, however, the number of copies printed during the first year was comparatively limited, and the impression, as regards these, would be exhausted almost immediately. The difficulty would disappear if the Museum possessed that indispensable auxiliary to its progress, a photographic department, in which the photographer's salary and the cost of chemicals should be paid by the State; thus allowing photographic work to be done gratuitously for the institution, and at a merely nominal rate for the public. In this case the deficient volumes would be supplied without any expense whatever, and the offer of the perfected sets to the public at a nominal cost would probably ensure sufficient subscribers for the remainder of the work. Until this great step towards the popular dissemination of the Museum's treasures in all departments has been taken, it will be necessary to reprint the earlier volumes of the catalogue; and the £1500 required for this purpose might probably be obtained from subscribers on condition of the other back volumes being thrown in as a bonus at a greatly reduced price. The longer the operation is delayed the more costly will it be for the Museum, which runs the risk of eventually finding itself with a hundred sets, mostly imperfect, on its hands, of which it will be impossible to get rid otherwise than by donation. A subscription once commenced is not likely to drop, as the value of a set of the catalogue depends upon its completeness.

It will now be naturally inquired, at what period may the completion of the catalogue be looked for? The answer will be, about the end of the century, if the Treasury grant is maintained at its present figure. The amount expended in printing, inclusive of that incurred for printing the titles of books added to the library, is about £3000 annually. Two years ago the grant for purchases throughout every department of the institution was reduced by two-fifths, and only half the amount has as yet been restored. If a similar mistaken spirit of economy had affected the grant for printing, the completion of the catalogue must have been proportionately delayed. Any expectation, therefore, which may be held out of the accomplishment of the work by the end of the century, or any other date, must be understood to be entirely subject to the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who has it in his power to retard progress indefinitely, or interrupt it altogether. It must be acknowledged that the behaviour of the Treasury towards this department of the Museum service has hitherto been very liberal; and that the grant for printing is as large as, with the numerous other demands upon the library staff, can be employed to advantage. The preparation of copy for the press, and its subsequent correction and revision, occupy the entire time of several of the best assistants; and, were absolute bibliographical accuracy aimed at, would require that of several more. This cannot be had, and all pretension to minute accuracy has invariably been disclaimed. It has been felt all along that a

number of trifling errors are preferable to the huge and unpardonable error of not accomplishing the work at all. From what has been said, it will be apparent that the publication of this catalogue is carried on under very different conditions from those habitual in similar undertakings. Three thousand pounds a year must be spent upon it; or, as regards Museum purposes, must be thrown away. Any balance unexpended at the end of the financial year must revert to the Treasury, and would be an uncompensated loss as regards the Museum. This misfortune has hitherto been avoided—partly by an energy and diligence on the part of the gentlemen employed, of which it is impossible to speak too warmly or too gratefully—partly by a resolute determination not to aim at an ideal perfection, which, under the circumstances, would be absolutely mischievous.

Ordinary visitors to the library may from one point of view be divided into two classes, those who are astonished that it has not got every book in the world, and those who marvel that it possesses so many books as it does. Nothing is commoner than the remark, "I suppose you have everything that ever was printed," unless it is the exclamation, "You surely do not keep all the rubbish!" These two sets of ideas may be taken to represent the two tendencies which affect every public library; and by consequence every complete catalogue of its contents, that of mechanical accretion, and that of intelligent selection. The operation of the Copyright Act is, of course, responsible for most of the

element of "rubbish" in the catalogue; while a moment's thought will show the impossibility of making the librarian a censor, and allowing him to exclude whatever might not square with his prejudices or fancies. A considerable part of the catalogue, therefore, must be devoted to recording publications of little intrinsic value, but even here there is an important reservation to be made. Time, which in so many instances abates the value of what is really precious, makes in a fashion amends by bestowing worth on what was once of little account. What would we not give for a *Court Gazette* of the days of Augustus, or a list of odds at the Olympic games? There is absolutely no telling what value the most insignificant details of the nineteenth century may possess for the nineteenth millennium: even now men of letters might find the same intellectual stimulus in many a trivial page of the Museum Catalogue, as a distinguished living orator is said to find in Johnson's Dictionary. Next to this automatic factor in the increase of the catalogue may be named the element of seeming accident—the addition to the library of various classes of books, now at one time, now at another, as apparent chance, but actual law has prescribed. If we can imagine the various constituents of the Museum Library piled upon one another in chronological sequence, and a shaft driven down from the top, we may conceive ourselves coming upon a succession of strata, as the geologist finds when he bores for coal, or the archæologist when he explores the site of a city

where men have dwelt from the age of Hercules to the age of Heraclius. The Museum was founded by a great physician ; the library, therefore, rests upon a sound substratum of old medical books. The King was the next important benefactor ; next above early medicine and natural history, accordingly, comes a stratum of royal libraries from the first Tudor to the last Stuart, each a miniature representative of the best literature of its time. The Hanoverian sovereigns, though no great patrons of letters, were diligent collectors of pamphlets : hence the priceless collection of Civil War and other important tracts which immediately succeeded the donations already mentioned. As the growth of the Museum attracted further liberality ("To him that hath shall be given"), the collection naturally took an impress from the tastes of the private collectors by whom it was enriched. Hence abundant wealth in classics and the early literature of the Latin family of languages, accompanied by poverty in languages which the collectors did not understand, and subjects for which they did not care. When, thanks to Panizzi, the library at last obtained an adequate grant for purchases, the librarian's own intelligence became a much more important factor than formerly. To continue our metaphor, the contents of the recent strata would be found far more composite than of old, and more puzzling to the intellectual geologist. He would come upon various fragmentary formations, as it were, in which, trifling and remote effects of prodigious causes, he would discern vestiges of the

great events of the time. Thus the growth of Greater Britain is legible in piles of colonial newspapers, and the Paris Commune is represented by a mass of caricatures and the scorched books of an Imperial Prince, literally saved out of the fire. It is the librarian's business at once to profit by this tendency to the accumulation of specialities, and to counteract it: to take advantage of every opportunity that may arise of enriching the library in definite directions, and at the same time of providing for the steady influx of miscellaneous literature, alike of the past and of the present as regards foreign nations: of English contemporary literature the Copyright Act, as above explained, takes sufficient care. It seems paradoxical, but it is true, that the Museum should be the home both of the books which every one expects to find in it, and of those which no one expects to find—of the literary freight which can ride the ocean, and of that which would perish without the haven of a public library. The catalogue must be the mirror of the library, and it is not the least of the many advantages of print that the public have now much better means than formerly of judging how the most difficult functions of librarianship have been understood and discharged at the Museum. In this connection mention may be made of a minor feature of the publication of the catalogue of considerable importance: the issue of extra copies of special articles as excerpts, sold separately at the lowest possible price. In this manner bibliographies, complete as far as the Museum collections are concerned, of Aristotle,

Bacon, Bunyan, Byron, Dante, Goethe, and other writers of special importance have been issued. These should be of great value to students, and would probably have a large sale if their existence were more generally known. At present, like other Museum publications, they suffer from imperfect publicity. Another very valuable appendix to the catalogue of printed books is the catalogue of maps and plans, reduced, under Professor Douglas's direction, from upwards of three hundred of MS. to two volumes of print as issued to the public, or fourteen as laid down for use in the Reading Room. The four hundred and fifty MS. volumes of the catalogue of music, it is hoped, are on the eve of undergoing similar treatment.

Apart from the errors which must inevitably creep into so vast a work, dealing with such a variety of languages and literatures, and now in progress for more than fifty years, a considerable amount of imperfection is evidently inseparable from the very nature of the undertaking. It does not and cannot represent the condition of the library at any given moment. The volumes containing A, for example, will comprise the books under that letter possessed by the Museum in 1882 or 1883; but T, which for reasons which we have no space to explain, will probably be the last letter to be printed, will represent the condition of the library, as regards that letter, about the year 1900. During the whole progress of the catalogue an incessant shower of new titles representing the new books continually being



acquired, will have been descending at the rate of some 40,000 a year. Those belonging to letters not yet at press will have been taken up and absorbed by the catalogue in its progress; those belonging to the letters already in type must fall into a supplement. The article Thackeray, therefore, will be more complete than Dickens, and Thucydides than Herodotus. As concerns the student at the Museum, this is of no importance; the additions being regularly incorporated in the Reading Room catalogue in the manner above described. The catalogue as issued to subscribers, however, is necessarily imperfect and irregular. Supposing, for example, that Lord Tennyson and Mr. Browning were to simultaneously publish translations of Homer when the printing of the catalogue had reached the article Jones, Lord Tennyson's version would appear under Tennyson, but not under Homer, and Mr. Browning's version would not appear at all. There is but one way of obtaining a perfect index to the condition of the national library at a given time: the catalogue must be reprinted along with the numerous accessions which have been accumulating while the first edition has been going through the press—a national undertaking which will commend itself to men of letters more readily than to ministers of finance. Should, however, the completion of the catalogue nearly coincide with the commencement of the twentieth century, it may be hoped that this will be one of the many ways in which, if the new century does not, like its predecessors, find the

nation traversing a crisis, the epoch will assuredly be commemorated. It would remain to provide for the regular reprinting of the catalogue with its accessions at intervals, say of a quarter of a century. England would then possess a complete index to the growth of the national library, and the world would have the nearest approach to a register of all literature that, in the absence of any feasible scheme for a universal catalogue by co-operation among public libraries, it seems likely to obtain. Even this more ambitious project might be promoted if public libraries would consent to take the Museum Catalogue as a basis, and publish lists of such of their own books as are not to be found in it. By this means the expense and labour of cataloguing would be very greatly reduced, and the combination of these lists with the Museum Catalogue, when this came to be printed for the third time, say about 1925, would at last provide the desideratum of a universal register of literature.

Ambitious undertakings like these, however, depend upon the co-operation of many governments and many institutions. We can speak with more confidence of the efforts of the Museum to provide what is only second in importance to the catalogue itself—a classified index of its contents. With this object in view several copies of the catalogue are printed on one side only, that when completed they may be cut up, and the titles sorted according to subject, and re-arranged in classified lists. Thus by simply putting together all titles bearing the

press mark E, we shall obtain a separate catalogue of the Civil War Tracts ; and a similar proceeding as respects the titles marked F, will afford a similar catalogue of the Croker collection of pamphlets on the French Revolution. Classed indexes to the literature of any subject can be made with equal facility, and as several copies of the catalogue will be available for treatment in the manner suggested, they may be varied for different objects, or to suit different systems of classification. For all strictly Museum purposes it would suffice to paste the titles excerpted on sheets of paper, but any of the indexes thus prepared might be printed and published. The only difficulty or delay would arise from the incorporation of the supplementary titles, which, as already explained, will have been continually added during the printing of the catalogue, and even this could be obviated by reprinting the entire catalogue as suggested above.

These hints, imperfect as they are, should convince the reader that the future of the Museum Catalogue, supposing the institution to be maintained in its present condition of efficiency, will not be less remarkable than its past. It will continue to make demands on the liberality of successive generations, which will be the more readily met the more the voluminous development of literature enforces the conviction that, next to positive addition to the world's stock of information, the most important service to culture is the preserving, arranging, and rendering accessible the stores which

the world already possesses. The recovery of the catalogue of the Alexandrian Library, if a less delightful, would probably be a more substantial gain to knowledge than the recovery of any individual author. But what the literature of the world is to the literature of ancient Greece, the Catalogue of the British Museum is to that of the Alexandrian Library.

## THE BRITISH MUSEUM CATALOGUE AS THE BASIS OF A UNIVERSAL CATALOGUE<sup>1</sup>

BUT little has of late been heard of the proposed Universal Catalogue of Literature, which was a favourite subject of discussion some years ago. The cause may partly be the loss of some like Sir Henry Cole and the late lamented Mr. Ernest Thomas, who were especially interested in the project; but must be mainly, I should think, the growing perception of the difficulty of the undertaking. It could no doubt be performed by a sufficiently numerous body of competent persons, working under efficient control, guided by fixed rules, and influenced by such consideration in the shape of salary and pension as to induce them to devote their lives to it. There is not, however, the least probability of the endowment of such a college of cataloguers. If the Universal Catalogue is ever to be attained, we must submit to proceed by gradual approaches, and to be content with something very far short of perfection in the execution of the work. We must take the printed

<sup>1</sup> Communicated to the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the Library Association, Paris, September 1892.

catalogue of that library which most nearly approaches universality as a basis, and we must appeal to the administrators of other libraries to supplement its deficiencies; without insisting upon too rigid a uniformity of method, which could not be enforced.

While the project for a Universal Catalogue has remained in suspense, another catalogue has been silently growing up in print, far enough indeed from universality, but approaching it more closely than any other work of the kind. Commenced in 1881, and likely, if the Treasury grant is continued, to be completed at or a little before the close of the century, the printed Museum Catalogue will be the register of about a million distinct publications. If its contents do not comprise a majority of the books existing in the world, they undoubtedly comprise a very great majority of the books which it is really important to catalogue. My recommendation to those who desire to see a Universal Catalogue—as all do in theory—is to accept this confessedly imperfect catalogue as a temporary substitute, and labour to perfect it by the co-operation of the principal libraries throughout the world, not by reconstruction, which would introduce confusion and delay the undertaking indefinitely, but by the simple addition of such books in their possession as the Museum Catalogue does not embrace. This would further involve the establishment of some central authority to edit these accessions, either incorporated with the Museum

Catalogue or separately, as circumstances might prescribe.

Even the Museum Catalogue, however, is at present inadequate to provide a basis for a Universal Catalogue, for the reason that it is in comparatively few hands. If general co-operation towards perfecting it is to be invited, it must be widely disseminated. It must be reprinted, and distributed gratuitously to all important libraries. It is, moreover, defective in its published form (not in the copy used in the Reading Room), even as regards the contents of the Museum itself, on account of the number of accession titles which will have been steadily accumulating during the eighteen or nineteen years of its passage through the press. A large portion of these have been absorbed during the printing; an equal number, perhaps, are excluded by the publication of the volume of catalogue before the appearance of the book. Letter B, therefore, is more complete than A, C than B, and so on. From the point of view of the Universal Catalogue, reprinting is thus an absolute necessity. It should take place at the earliest practicable date after the completion of the catalogue. The Government cannot be reasonably expected to provide the funds without strong pressure from public opinion, and it is partly in the hope of stimulating this opinion that I have ventured these observations. But if the Universal Catalogue is to be anything more than a fair vision, we must do more than stimulate others, we must organise ourselves. We must know what libraries

throughout the civilised world would be ready, upon receiving a copy of the republished Museum Catalogue, to supplement its deficiencies by furnishing the titles of such of their own books as are not to be found there. We must establish a central committee or committees to take charge of such titles, to cancel the innumerable duplicates, to reduce the others to approximate conformity with the rules on which the basis catalogue has been executed. We must have learned to what extent pecuniary assistance to small or over-worked libraries may be necessary, and have considered how to provide it. We must have determined whether the General Catalogue is to embrace that of the Museum or to be merely supplementary, and in either case have framed some estimate of the probable expense, and of the means of meeting it. We must have decided some important questions, as, for instance, whether pamphlets, newspapers, public documents, should be included, whether oriental books, to what extent cross-references should be allowed, if admitted at all. These points and many others cannot be settled without active intercommunication among librarians, and when I consider the attendant difficulties I own I am not sanguine that the project will have matured by the time that the Museum Catalogue is in print.

When, however, the difficulties of organisation have been at length overcome, when the Museum Catalogue is actually in the hands of the directors of all important libraries, and the task of supplying



its deficiencies is being steadily prosecuted in a hundred different places ; when the editorial committee is fairly engaged upon its task of revision and incorporation, and public sympathy has been fully enlisted, as would ere long assuredly be the case, the record of the world's literature which now may seem to many an utopian project, will have been brought within reach. In thus carrying it out we should have effected an object of still greater importance—the establishment of an universal literary registry, whose developments and ramifications it is impossible to predict. Such an institution is hardly likely to come into being without the tangible inducement of an Universal Catalogue ; and it is on this account, quite as much as its own, that an Universal Catalogue is desirable. The organisation created to effect it would not be allowed to perish, but would be maintained for objects more important still. All these possibilities, however, will remain but visions unless they are based upon the firm ground of some actually existing catalogue, which may serve as a stepping-stone to the ideal catalogue of the future.

*Cæteris paribus*, there can be no doubt that the biggest catalogue must be the best, and it is on this ground, and not from any claim of superiority of execution, that I venture to recommend the Museum Catalogue as this necessary basis and stepping-stone, and to affirm that the problem of making an Universal Catalogue will be greatly simplified if it is conceived as the problem of supplementing the deficiencies of the most extensive

partial catalogue we possess at present. The subject is one eminently suitable for consideration at this conference, which, as the first ever held upon the Continent, possesses stronger claims to an international character than any of its predecessors.

## INTRODUCTION OF EUROPEAN PRINTING INTO THE EAST<sup>1</sup>

SPEAKING to-night as President of the Bibliographical Society, I have found it necessary to select some point of bibliography as the subject of my discourse. The subjects which profitably occupy the ordinary meetings of the Society would not be appropriate to a numerous and various assemblage like the present. Now that Internationalism and Imperialism are in the air, and that the thoughts of the Queen's home-bred subjects have perforce been carried far beyond the precincts of their native isles, I have deemed that interest might be felt in a brief retrospect of the first steps by which the most intellectually valuable of all the arts was transplanted from Europe to the other quarters of the Old World. American typography I leave to our visitors, better qualified to treat it. I prefer no claim to originality, but rather rest the utility of my paper upon the advantage of bringing to one focus a number of facts hitherto scattered through a number of books, and by consequence but partially known.

I have often thought that our reunion with

<sup>1</sup> Read before the London Meeting of the Library Association, 1896.

our Aryan brethren of Hindostan, when, after millenniums of separation, we Europeans returned to them in the characters of travellers, merchants, and missionaries, may be compared to the meeting of Jacob and Esau. As of old, the younger brother had been the more prosperous. We brought them more precious gifts than any we could receive from them, and among these was the art of printing. But it was out of our power to bestow such a boon upon the more numerous yellow race, for it already possessed it. China and Korea too had been acquainted with printing for centuries, and not merely with block printing, but with movable types. These, however, were rarely employed, in consequence, I imagine, of the great extent and complexity of the Chinese alphabet, or rather syllabarium; and it no more entered into the head of a Chinese to print a foreign language than it occurred to a Greek of the Roman Empire to translate a Latin book. Amazing consequences would have followed if China would but have reformed her alphabet and communicated her art to her neighbours. Had it but found its way to Constantinople by the tenth century, we should have preserved most of that lost classical literature for which, with much to encourage and much to dispirit, we are now sifting the dust of Egyptian catacombs. It does indeed appear from recent discoveries among the papyri of Archduke Rainier that the Saracens of Egypt had grasped the principle of block printing in the tenth century, probably from intercourse with China. But this does but increase the wonder

that they should have merely struck off a few insignificant documents and carried the idea no further.

Even when at length the art of printing became known in Europe, its progress was for some time marvellously slow. For several years its practice was confined to a single city, and this would probably have continued still longer but for civil dissensions, which drove the printers abroad. We need not be surprised, then, that it should have been a hundred and six years after Gutenberg before any book proceeded from a European press upon the continent of Asia; or, if we date from the voyage of Vasco da Gama, now exactly four hundred years ago, we shall see that sixty-four years, or two generations, elapsed before the Portuguese conquerors gave a printing-press to India. There was probably but little need for typography, either in the military or the civil service; but in process of time another interest asserted itself—the missionary. We shall find that the larger number of Spanish and Portuguese books printed abroad, whether in America or in the East, were designed for the conversion and instruction of the natives.

This was not, however, precisely the case with the first book printed in India, or printed by Europeans in any part of the Old World outside of Europe, although it was a religious book, "The Spiritual Compendium of the Christian Life," by Gaspar de Leão, first Archbishop of Goa (Goa, 1561). The author had come out as Archbishop in 1560,

and this book appears to be either the full text or an abridgment of the sermons preached by him in the visitation of his diocese in that year. It is much to be hoped that a book so memorable for the circumstances of its publication may be still extant ; but Silva, in his Portuguese bibliographical dictionary, does not, as he usually does when he can, intimate the existence of a copy in the National Library of Lisbon or elsewhere ; nor does Martin Antonio Fernandes allude to the existence of it, or any other of Archbishop Leão's writings at Goa, in the sermon which he preached on the occasion of the translation of his remains in 1864. Archbishop Leão printed two other books at Goa—a tract against the Jews, and another against the Mahometans ; but these were posterior to the second Goa book, a copy of which is in the British Museum—the “Dialogues on Indian Simples and Drugs,” by Garcia da Horta, printed at Goa in 1563. This is a work of great merit, said to contain the first account of Asiatic cholera. It is also remarkable as the first book in which any production of Camoens was given to the world ; for, although the Lusian bard had written much, he had published nothing previous to the appearance of a complimentary copy of verses to da Horta, prefixed to this book. The Museum is, no doubt, indebted for its copy of this very rare work to its founder, Sir Hans Sloane, for whom it would have much interest. A Latin translation went through many editions, and the original was reprinted in 1872.

Thirteen books are enumerated by Ribeiro dos

Sanctos as having been published at Goa up to 1655, and there were probably others of a merely ephemeral character. The most interesting are a "Life of St. Peter in Marathi," by Estevão da Cruz, 1634—if not a translation, perhaps the first book, other than a catechism, written by a European in an Indian vernacular; and the record of the proclamation of John IV. in 1641, when Portugal recovered her independence. This book, which is in the British Museum, indicates the lowest stage of typographical debasement, but is interesting from its patriotic feeling.

Two Tamil books are said to have been printed by the Jesuits in 1577 and 1598 respectively, at Ambalakata, a place on the Malabar coast, probably now ruined or known by some other name.

Before leaving India, I may mention a remarkable circumstance, not, so far as I know, hitherto recorded in typographical history. It appears from that marvellously interesting book, too soon interrupted, Mr. Sainsbury's "Calendar of the Papers of the East India Company," that in 1624 the Shah of Persia, "having an earnest desire to bring into his country the art of printing," was "very importunate" with the agents of the Company at Ispahan, "to write for men skilful in the science, whom he promises to maintain at his own charge." It does not appear that the Company, who were then meditating the relinquishment of their Persian branch as unprofitable, took any steps to fulfil the Shah's wishes, and of course the casting of Oriental types in Persia, or their transport thither, would have been very

difficult undertakings. But the desire to endow Persia with a printing-press nevertheless reflects the highest honour upon the Shah, who was no less famous a person than Abbas the Great.

From India we pass to China, and here an important discovery has been made of late years. It has until very lately been universally believed that the first book printed by Europeans in China was Eduardus de Sande, "*De Missione legatorum Japonensium ad Romanam Curiam*" (Macao, 1590). My friend, Señor José T. Medina, the Hercules and Lynceus of South American bibliographers, has, however, found from the book itself that this cannot be the case, for the writer of the preliminary address, Alexander Valignanus, states that he has himself previously published at the same place a book by Joannes Bonifacius, "*De honesta puerorum institutione*." This must have appeared in 1589, if not sooner, and is undoubtedly the first book printed by Europeans in China. Unfortunately it cannot be produced, for it is not to be found. A copy may still be lurking in some ancient library, and great will be his merit who brings it to light. It may be mentioned that although the book "*De Missione*" principally relates to Europe, and was compiled under the fiction of imaginary conversations with the Japanese ambassadors (who really had visited Europe and returned) for the information of the Japanese pupils of the Jesuits, one chapter is an account of China for the benefit of European readers. It is full of interest; and although its particulars have long



become common property, it would be well worth translating as a contemporary account. Sande's book, it is needless to state, is of exceeding rarity. It may be seen in a show-case in the King's library at the British Museum, side by side with the very oldest South American books.

European publications in China since 1590 are numerous, and have been enumerated by that distinguished Sinologue, M. Henri Cordier, in his epoch-making bibliography. Time, however, compels me to pass to Japan, where the subject has received most important illustration from the labours of the present English minister to that country, Sir Ernest Mason Satow. Sir Ernest found examples of the use of movable types in Japan about 1598, and endeavoured to ascertain whether the art had been imported from Korea, where, as I have already stated, it existed at a much earlier period, or whether it was taught to the Japanese by the Jesuit missionaries. The point remains undecided; but Sir Ernest's researches have acquainted him with fourteen books printed by the missionaries between 1591 and 1605—some in Latin, some in Japanese, some in both languages. Some are religious in character, others philological. One, exceptionally, is a translation into Japanese of "*Æsop's Fables*," thus curiously restored to the East whence they originally came. Sir Ernest, himself a Japanese scholar, has given a minute account of all, with the aid of numerous facsimiles. All, of course, are of the greatest rarity, and chiefly to be found in the public libraries of London,

Paris, Lisbon, Oxford, Leyden, and Rome, or in the collection of the Earl of Crawford. Sir Ernest Satow mentions, in an appendix, others which have been stated to exist, but have not been recovered. Some of these, it is probable, were merely manuscripts. It may be added that the frontispieces of these books, engraved by natives under European direction, evince much talent, and that the same is the case with similar work subsequently executed in South America and the Philippines.

The extirpation of Christianity in Japan destroyed European printing in that country; but books relating to Japan, chiefly acts of Japanese martyrs, continued for some time to be produced at Manila, the capital of the Philippines. The history of Manila printing is thoroughly investigated in the classical work of Señor Medina, whom I have already named as the discoverer of the real beginning of printing at Macao. It seems probable that the art was directly imported into Manila from the latter city. Two books—one in Spanish and Tagala, the other in Chinese—appear as printed in 1593, then follows a gap of nine years, after which publications begin to be tolerably frequent, and altogether a hundred and twelve are enumerated up to the end of the seventeenth century. A large proportion are in the vernacular languages. It is remarkable that the Caxton of the Philippines was a Chinese convert, whose celestial origin is disguised under the name of Juan de Vera. This fact is only known by the testimony of a Dominican,

since it is another remarkable circumstance and peculiar to the Philippines, that for a very long time the name of no private individual appears as that of a printer, the imprint being always that of some religious or educational institution.

One other important city in the Eastern Archipelago possessed printing at an early date. This was Batavia. The Museum possesses treaties with native princes printed there in 1668, and these were probably not the first. A printed book also is referred to the same year.

Now, like Scipio, we must carry the war into Africa. As might be expected in the Dark Continent, the appearance of the first African printed book is a matter of some obscurity; not that the statements respecting time and place and authorship are not precise, but because it has hitherto been impossible to verify them. Nicolas Antonio, in his "*Bibliotheca Hispanica*," distinctly mentions "*Theses rhetoricæ, varia eruditione refertæ*," by Antonio Macedo, a celebrated Portuguese Jesuit who is said to have had a hand in the conversion of Queen Christina of Sweden, as printed at Funchal in Madeira in 1637. I cannot find that this book has ever come to light, or that any other early production of the Funchal press has been recorded, though one would think that such must have existed. I need not say that the first African book would be a treasure almost rivalling the volume with which Mexico initiated American typography in 1539, or the Goa and Macao books whose probable disappearance we have been lamenting.

There is room for error ; Antonio hardly appears to have himself seen the book. But, on the other hand, there may well be copies in the possession of persons to whom the imprint Funchal suggests nothing. A Macao or Manila book at once announces itself as something extraordinary by the peculiarity of its paper, but a book printed in Madeira would probably be indistinguishable in general appearance from contemporary productions on the Portuguese mainland, whose appearance at the period was fully in keeping with the then fallen fortunes of the nation. If, therefore, the book ever existed, I shall not despair of its being found, most probably at Lisbon, Funchal, or Rome. If its existence is mythical, the first African printed book would probably be the catechism on baptism in the Angola language by Francisco Pacconio, executed at Loanda, the capital of the Portuguese settlements on the west coast, said at least to have been printed there in 1641, but perhaps only sent out from Lisbon. If actually printed at Loanda, it would be the first book printed on the African mainland, and hence of the highest bibliographical interest. But it may have been confounded with a similar catechism by the same author, published at Lisbon in 1642. Books were printed at Santa Cruz de Tenerife at least as early as 1754. Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius, followed soon afterwards. Apart from official documents, the first book printed in South Africa is G. F. Grand's "Memoirs of a Gentleman" (Cape Town, 1814), exhibited at the

British Museum. To prevent misunderstanding, it may be remarked that the honour due to the first African book has been claimed for a narrative of the capture of the island of Terceira by the Marquis de Santa Cruz in 1583, but it is clear that the date Angra, the capital of the island, is not an imprint, but refers merely to the place where the despatch was written, and that it was printed in Spain.

I am not quite sure whether Australia properly belongs to my subject, but two circumstances of especial interest induce me to include it. One is that the first Australian publication, the official *Sydney Gazette* of 1803, is, I understand, at present a visitor to England in the custody of Mr. Anderson, librarian of the public library at Sydney, who contemplates reproducing it. The other is that what is believed to be the first Australian book, as distinguished from a newspaper or official notification, has been very recently acquired by the British Museum. It is a narrative of the crimes and death of William Howe, the last and worst of the bushrangers of Tasmania, and was printed at Hobart Town in 1817. It was noticed by the *Quarterly Review* so long ago as 1819, when it was prophesied that Australian bibliographers would one day fight for it as fiercely as English collectors contend for Caxton's "Reynard the Fox." If they do, they must fight with the Sydney Public Library, which, I am informed, has three copies. There is also a copy in the Bodleian.

The subject of the beginning of printing by Europeans in Asia and Africa is one which must

gain in interest as printing itself extends. Typography in these countries is as yet but in its infancy, for it has not laid hold of the mass of the people. It seems evident that the cumbrous Oriental alphabets must eventually give way to the simplicity of Roman type, and then one great bar to the intercommunication of ideas among Oriental nations will have ceased to exist. It may be that they will go a step further, and employ a single language for the purposes of general intercourse. So far as we can see at present, this language can hardly be any other than English. Should this come to pass, Lord Beaconsfield's celebrated saying, "England is a great Asiatic power," will prove true in a deeper and wider sense than he intended, and we shall look back with augmented veneration to the labours of the zealous and disinterested men who paved the way for European culture by first bringing the European printing-press to the far East.

## PARAGUAYAN AND ARGENTINE BIBLIOGRAPHY<sup>1</sup>

[*Bibliographica*, vol. i., pt. 3, published by Messrs.  
Kegan Paul & Co.]

THE great merit of the Spanish and Portuguese bibliographers has in some degree missed recognition from the exceptional character of their themes. They have done little for general bibliography or the literary history of other nations, but, observant of the German precept, have "swept before their own doors" in the most thorough manner. Nicolas Antonio and Barbosa Machado have given magnificent examples of what may be termed bio-bibliography, where not only the literary productiveness, but the life of the author is the subject of investigation. There are few books of the class to which resort can be made with so fair a prospect of being able to find exactly what is required. The dimensions of modern literature forbid the hope of such works being ever seen again. Bibliography and biography must henceforth walk apart, or at most, as in our own Dictionary of National Biography, one must sink into a mere appendage to the other. Works like Antonio's or Machado's belong to the

<sup>1</sup> *Historia y Bibliografía de la Imprenta en la América Española.* (Parte Segunda, Paraguay y el Virreinato del Río de la Plata.) Por José Toribio Medina (La Plata, 1892).

extinct mammoths of the past : yet more modern Spanish and Portuguese bibliographers have displayed equal diligence in more restricted fields. It would be difficult to praise too highly the research of a Mendez, a Salva, or an Icazbalceta, who, like their predecessors, manage to convey the impression of having exhausted their subjects. To these is now to be added Señor Jose Toribio Medina, a Chilean gentleman who has taken an entire continent for his province. In 1891 he produced his bibliography of Chilean literature to 1810, the era of South American independence. In 1892 the assistance of the Museo de la Plata, stimulated by the approaching congress at Huelva in commemoration of the discovery of America, enabled him to publish his bibliography of the Argentine Republic, including Paraguay and Uruguay, on a scale, and with a wealth of illustration, to ensure the book, if not the author, a foremost place amongst bibliographical mammoths, and to suggest that it might be used as collateral security for a new Argentine loan, could such things be. Compared with the tiny but serviceable lists of early South American books which Señor Medina has so frequently published in limited editions, his present volume is as the Genie outside the vase to the Genie within, and it must be the earnest hope of all interested in bibliographical research, and especially of all those who from personal acquaintance have learned to appreciate his indefatigable patriotism and single-minded earnestness, that the step now taken in advance may not be retraced, but that he may find encouragement to



produce the still more important bibliography of Peru, now nearly ready for the press, with equal completeness, if not on a scale equally magnificent. When this has been effected, Señor Medina will be at no loss for more worlds to conquer. "We shall follow up the subject," he says, "with the history of printing in the Captain-Generalship of Quito, in Bogota, Havana, Guatemala, and, please Heaven, in the Viceroyalty of Mexico, the cradle of the typographic art in America. Finally, we shall publish the general history of printing in the old Spanish colonies, for which we shall be able to employ a great number of documents hitherto entirely unknown."

The history of South American typography is as interesting in a bibliographical, as it is barren in a literary point of view. The hand-list of the productions of the Lima Press in colonial days, already published by Señor Medina, would alone be a sufficient indictment of Spanish rule, and a sufficient apology for the mistakes of the emancipated colonists. Apart from religious books published in the native languages, and the grammars and dictionaries associated with them, scarcely anything can be found indicative of intellectual life, or imparting anything that the citizen needs to know. Public ceremonies, bull-fights, legends of saints, theses in scholastic philosophy, make up the dreary catalogue, and show how a lively and gifted people were systematically condemned, in so far as their rulers' power extended, to frivolity, superstition and ignorance. But if South America was for

nearly three centuries a desert for literature, it was and is a happy hunting-ground for bibliography. The limited interest and limited circulation of such books as were produced conspired to make them rare; the best religious and philological works in Indian languages were commonly worn out or mutilated by constant use; local difficulties occasioned the production of others under peculiar and even romantic circumstances; such as the half-dozen perhaps printed, certainly published at Juli, twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea; or those rude but deeply interesting Paraguayan books which form the subject of Señor Medina's first chapter.<sup>1</sup>

The extreme difficulty of introducing any kind of literature into South America under the Spanish régime, cannot be better illustrated than by the history of the first Paraguayan book, now extant in a single copy in the library of Señor Trelles, a citizen of the Argentine Republic. First of all, about 1693, Father Jose Serrano translates Father Nieremberg's

<sup>1</sup> It has always been supposed that Paraguay was the first country of South America to possess a printing-press after Peru, but this honour may possibly be due to Brazil. In the memorial of the inhabitants of the province of Pernambuco to John IV., King of Portugal, beseeching his assistance in the expulsion of the Dutch invaders (1645), printed in "O Valoroso Lucideno" by Manoel Calado, Lisbon, 1648, the Dutch are accused of having propagated heresy by means of tracts, "which have been found in the hands of many persons of tender age." These *cartilhas* must evidently have been in Portuguese, they are more likely to have been printed than in MS., and it is perhaps more probable that they were printed on the spot than exported from Holland. If this is the case, Pernambuco is entitled to the honour of being the first city in South America in which printing was exercised after Lima.

treatise "on the difference between things temporal and things eternal," into Guarani, the vernacular of the Paraguay Indians. Father Tirso Gonzalez, the head of the mission, thinks it well that this translation and another of Ribadeneira's "*Flos Sanctorum*," also made by Father Serrano, should be printed nearer home than at Lima, the only city in the vast South American continent then in possession of a printing-press. Though they are religious works of the most edifying character, it is necessary to memorialise the Council of the Indies. Father Gonzalez does not make up his mind to this step until December 1699. At length, however, he writes to Spain, obtains permission, and, by the beginning of 1703, types have been cast and the numerous engravings in the Antwerp edition of Nieremberg's treatise copied by the native Indians, whose extraordinary imitative talent is celebrated by Father Labbe, who visited La Plata about this time. "I have seen," he says, "beautiful pictures executed by them, books very correctly printed by them, organs and all kinds of musical instruments. They make pocket timepieces, draw plans, engrave maps, &c."<sup>1</sup> One thing, however, they could not do, found types of proper hardness, inasmuch as the requisite metal for alloy did not exist. The consequent blurred appearance of the

<sup>1</sup> Several Spanish books printed at Manila in the eighteenth century have frontispieces admirably engraved by native artists. We have seen an English pamphlet printed in the Orange Free State, prefaced by an apology for mistakes of the press on the ground that the compositors were Hottentots.

impression has led high authorities to assert that the types were made of hard wood, which would not *a priori* have appeared improbable. The late lamented Mr. Talbot Reed, however, assured the present writer that this could not have been the case; and Señor Medina proves by an official letter, written in 1784, more than twenty years after the ruin of the missions, that the material was tin. The types which existed at that period have disappeared, the remains of the printing-press are still extant in the La Plata Museum. Señor Medina thinks that they ought to be restored: and so do we, provided only that enough remains to distinguish restoration from re-creation.

The book, announced as about to be printed in January 1703, eventually made its appearance in 1705; with the licenses of the Viceroy of Peru, the Dean of Asuncion, and the acting provincial of the Jesuits, two recommendations by divines, and two dedications by Father Serrano himself, the first to the Holy Spirit, who is addressed as "Your Majesty"; the second to Father Gonzalez. The place of imprint is given as "en las Doctrinas," probably the mission station of Santa Maria la Mayor. We must refer our readers to Señor Medina's volume for the interesting and minute bibliographical particulars it affords, as well as for the facsimiles of the original engravings, a remarkable episode in the history of the art, and only made accessible through Señor Medina's instrumentality, since the original exists in but a single copy.

The reader will have observed Father Labbe's statement that he has seen *books* printed by the Indians. At least one other book, therefore, should have been executed by them between 1705 and 1710, and Father Serrano undoubtedly intended to publish his Guarani version of Ribadneira's "Flos Sanctorum." If he did, no trace of the publication exists at present, nor is any further record of typography in Paraguay found until 1721, when a little liturgical manual for the use of missionaries, entirely in Guarani, with the exception of the first fifteen leaves, was printed at the mission station of Loreto. In 1722 and 1724 the "Vocabulario de la Lengua Guarani" and the "Arte de la Lengua Guarani," both by Antonio Ruiz de Montoya, a Peruvian missionary of the seventeenth century, were reprinted from the original Spanish editions, with copious additions, those to the latter work certainly, those to the former probably, by Paulo Restivo. Both these books were printed at Santa Maria la Mayor, as also was the catechism of Nicolas Yapuguai, a native Paraguayan, in 1724. His "Sermones y Exemplos" appeared at San Francisco Xavier in 1727, and in the same year and at the same place was printed the letter of the unfortunate ex-governor Joseph Antequera y Castro, indited in his prison at Lima, to his adversary the Bishop of Paraguay, who apparently only allowed it to be printed that he might add a more prolix reply. From this time until after the overthrow of Spanish authority, all trace of a press in Paraguay disappears. It should be added that the seven books

recorded are undoubtedly productions of one and the same press, although the place of imprint is frequently varied. One curiosity remains to be mentioned, a fragment of a Guarani catechism and syllabary, consisting of two wooden leaves paginated 4 and 13, on which characters are cut in relief precisely as in Chinese stereotypic printing. It is to be supposed that they are older than the books printed with movable types. They are in the library of Señor Lamas, to whom they were presented by an English traveller.

Four out of these seven books are in the British Museum—the Vocabulario and Arte of Ruiz de Montoya, Yapuguai's Catechism, and the letter of Antequera y Castro. The first two were presented in 1818 by Mr. George Bellas Greenough, the founder of the Geological Society. The Catechism was purchased in 1889, and the letter in 1893. The latter is the only copy hitherto known, and is the only one of the seven books of which some portion is not facsimiled by Señor Medina.

Printing had died out in Paraguay before its introduction into any other portion of the great La Plata region. It revived under Jesuit auspices at Cordova, where towards the end of the seventeenth century a college had been founded by Duarte y Quiros, which had become the chief educational institution of the country. By 1765 it had attained sufficient consequence to become sensible of the inconvenience of being unable to print its theses and other academical documents, which, so wretched was the provision then made for the intellectual

needs of the Spanish colonies, could only be done at Lima, more than a thousand miles off on the other side of the Andes. The Viceroy of Peru was accordingly appealed to, and permission obtained, fenced with all imaginable precautions and restrictions. No time was lost in printing five panegyrical orations upon the pious founder Duarte y Quiros, probably by Father Peramas, which appeared in 1766. Two, or possibly three, minor publications, now entirely lost, had followed, when the existence of the press was abruptly terminated by the suppression of the Jesuits, and Cordova never saw another until after the independence. The types, however, not tin like the Paraguayan, but imported from Spain and cast *secundum artem*, were preserved in the college, and in 1780 were transferred to Buenos Ayres, where it had been resolved to introduce typography; not for its own sake, but as a means of raising money towards the support of a foundling hospital, endowed with the proceeds of the printing-press. Official and ecclesiastical patronage were not wanting; by the end of 1781 twenty-seven publications of various descriptions, mostly of course on a very small scale, had issued from the Buenos Ayres press. The first of any kind was a proclamation relating to the militia, facsimiled by Señor Medina; the first deserving the character of a book was, as in British North America, an almanac. The most interesting from their subject were pastoral letters by two bishops on the overthrow of the rebel cacique Tupac Amaru in Peru. The press continued to thrive, and in

1789 it was necessary to procure a new fount of type from Spain. The total number of publications known to the end of 1810 is 851—a very large proportion of which, however, are merely fly-sheets. Some, nevertheless, are of exceptional interest, such as the translation of Dodsley's "Economy of Human Life," perhaps the first translation of an English book ever published in Spanish America, and the numerous broadsides attesting the impression at first produced in the colonies by Napoleon's invasion of the mother country. Eight proclamations by General Beresford during the brief occupation of the city by the British forces in 1806 are of especial interest to Englishmen. In one Beresford endeavours to conciliate the good-will of the inhabitants by promising deliverance from the financial oppression of the Spanish colonial system. They soon afterwards took the matter into their own hands: the publications for the last months over which Señor Medina's labours extend are chiefly proclamations by the Junta and similar revolutionary documents. Among them, duly facsimiled by Señor Medina, is the proclamation of the Junta, with the date of May 23, 1810, announcing the virtual deposition of the Viceroy, the first document of Buenos Ayrean independence, although the authority of Ferdinand the Seventh is still acknowledged in name, and the autonomy of the country was not proclaimed until 1816. Another curiosity, also facsimiled, is a proclamation in Spanish and Quichua, "from the most persecuted American," Iturri Patiño, to the inhabitants of Cochabamba in



Upper Peru, more than a thousand miles from Buenos Ayres, exhorting them to welcome their deliverers. The interest is greatly enhanced by Señor Medina's industry in tracing out other works of the writers, published in other parts of South America.

The story of the introduction, expulsion, and revival of printing in Monte Video is one of the most curious—we might almost say dramatic—episodes in the history of the art. The city, which had existed nearly two hundred years without any more typographical implement than a stamping machine, was taken by an English expedition in February 1807. With the invaders came an enterprising Briton whose name is unfortunately not recorded, but who, before leaving England, had invested in a printing-press and types, and brought them with him with the view of earning an honest penny by dissipating South American darkness. He received every encouragement from the English military and naval authorities, but most probably had to train native compositors, who could not be extemporised in a city destitute of a printing-press. At all events he did not get to work till May, when the first production of his press was a proclamation, from which it appears that General Whitelock, whose expedition was to end so disastrously, at the time considered himself entitled to exercise authority over the whole of South America. And whereas it has been asserted that wherever an Englishman goes the first institution he creates is a public-house, be it noted that the next official announcement

imposes a swinging tax upon the public-houses already existing, without any loophole for local option. On May 23, an eventful date in Argentine history, appeared the first numbers of *The Southern Star*, *La Estrella de Sur*, a journal in English and Spanish, conducted by Adjutant-General Bradford, proudly displaying the lion and the unicorn, and addressing the native population as "fellow-subjects," a description softened in the Spanish version into *amigos*. The consternation produced by this portent at Buenos Ayres was excessive. "The enemies of our holy religion, of our king, and of the weal of mankind," declared the Audiencia, "have chosen the printing-press as their most effectual weapon. They are diffusing papers full of the most detestable ideas, even to the pitch of asserting that their infamous and abominable religion differs very little from ours." The misfortunes of the British arms, however, extinguished *The Southern Star* after the third number, and the publisher, whose property in his press and types was guaranteed by the capitulation, was glad to sell them to the Buenos Ayres Foundling Hospital for five thousand pesos, which, whether in the spirit of speculation or by reason of the deficiency of the circulating medium so unhappily chronic in those regions, he received in cascarilla at the rate of twelve reals a pound. The object of the authorities was no doubt to get the press and its appurtenances away from Monte Video. Within three short years Buenos Ayres became the focus of revolution, while Monte Video was still

precariously loyal. The Princess Regent and her advisers, then established at Rio de Janeiro, finding that the revolutionists were flooding the country with their pamphlets, invoked the power they had striven to suppress, and deeming to cast out Satan by Beelzebub, shipped a quantity of Brazilian type, very bad, to judge by Señor Medina's facsimile, to Monte Video, where, for the short remaining period comprehended in Señor Medina's work, it was employed in producing Government manifestos and an official journal; edited for a time by Father Cirilo de Alameda, of whom it is recorded that he never wrote anything tolerable except a defence of the Spanish constitution, and that this was adapted from a panegyric on the Virgin.

This slight notice can give but a very imperfect idea of the varied interest and splendid execution of Señor Medina's volume, a work as creditable to the country which has produced it for the excellence of the typography and the beauty of the numerous facsimiles, as to the author for the extent and accuracy of his research, and the curious and interesting particulars, biographical as well as bibliographical, which he brings to light on every page. Could the remainder of Spanish America be treated in a similar style, that much-neglected part of the world would rival, if not surpass, any European country in the external dignity of its bibliographical record. This may be too much to expect, but it is greatly to be hoped that Señor Medina will find means for giving to the world what is actually indispensable to the completion of

his important task. He is a citizen of the most prosperous, progressive, and orderly state in South America. It would be to the honour of the rulers of Chili if, overlooking all political differences, they gave their distinguished fellow-citizen the means of associating the name of his country, as well as his own, with as meritorious an undertaking as ever appealed to the sympathy of an enlightened State.

## THE EARLY ITALIAN BOOK TRADE

[*Bibliographica*, vol. i. pt. 3, published by Messrs.  
Kegan Paul & Co.]

THERE are few inquiries more interesting than one into the character and tendencies of an epoch, as ascertained by their reflection in its literature. Such an investigation, if referring to modern times and extended beyond a single country, must generally be incomplete on account of the great mass of the materials, which defies any exhibition of the literary tendencies prevailing at any given period over the whole of Europe. In the first age of printing alone the number of books is not absolutely unmanageable, and their bibliographical interest has ensured their accurate description in catalogues. It would not be beyond the power of industry to make a digest of the *incunabula* of the fifteenth century, so far as to show the number of books printed in each country, their respective subjects, the frequency of reprints, the ratio of the various classes to each other, the proportion of Latin to vernacular books, and other particulars of this nature by which the intellectual currents of the age might be mapped out.

The present essay is to be regarded as no more than a very imperfect indication of the feasibility of such an undertaking. Observations, sufficiently

desultory, on the general character of the literature published in Italy, from the introduction of printing into the country to the end of the century, have suggested some remarks on the kind of books which the early Italian printers found it profitable to produce, and some inferences respecting the taste of the day, and the classes which would be reached by the printing-press. To afford a really satisfactory ground-work for such an inquiry, all known publications should be enumerated (although the briefest titles would serve), and tabulated according to their subjects. Deductions regarding the intellectual aspects of the time might then be made with some confidence, and the apparently dry and unpromising ground-work would admit of rich illustration from the stores of contemporary literary history. Any such fulness of treatment is, of course, as incompatible with the space available in *Bibliographica* as with the time at the disposal of the writer. Enough, it is hoped, will have been done to show how interesting a detailed analysis of the subject might be made. The Roman and Venetian presses have been chiefly dwelt upon, inasmuch as these two cities, the first in Italy to possess printing-presses, also served to test the opposite systems of reliance upon patronage in high quarters, or upon the free life of a busy and prosperous community. The result is instructive, and has been confirmed by every similar experiment in later times.

In examining the literature of the age, as represented by the contemporary productions of the

press, we are particularly impressed by its utilitarian, and, as a corollary, its essentially popular character. We do not employ this latter term as indicative of a relation between the printers and the mass of the people, who at that period were generally unable to read, but between the printers and their limited public. In our times a considerable proportion of the current literature of the day is produced without any reference to the needs and tastes of the reading public. The author knows that he will not be read, but it nevertheless suits him to put his opinions, his experiences, or his skill in composition upon record; for the gratification of his self-esteem, it may be, or the expression of his emotions, or as a document for future reference, or as an act of duty, or for the pleasure of friends, or for any one or more of these and many other conceivable reasons. Were it not for the safety-valve afforded by the periodical press, the number of books thus existing for the author's individual sake would be very much more considerable. Hardly anything of this is to be observed in the early ages of publishing. Scarcely a book is to be found for which a public might not be reasonably expected, and which, therefore, would not be produced without the expectation of profit. We know that this expectation was not always realised from Sweynheym and Pannartz's petition to Pope Sixtus IV., that he would indemnify them by some public appointment for the loss of capital sunk in their unsold publications, but the books were such as promised to command a sale, and the reason of

their failure was probably the competition of other Italian presses. They were principally classical authors or Fathers of the Church, and it may be that exigencies of Papal patronage led Sweynheym and his partner to produce more of the latter class than was prudent on strictly commercial grounds. If so, the case was quite exceptional, and does not invalidate the general proposition that the Italian printers of the Renaissance looked entirely, and in the main intelligently, to the needs of their public. It is thus easy to discover the character of this constituency, and to estimate its requirements.

For long after the invention of printing the books produced consist mainly of four classes :— (1) Classical, (2) Grammatical, (3) Theological, (4) Legal. The immense proportion of these in comparison with other subjects demonstrates that the great majority of readers belonged to the professional classes—teachers, or at least students at the universities, divines, and practitioners of civil or canon law. Had a leisured and cultured class existed, as in our times, we should have seen more modern history and biography, more essays and facetiæ, more vernacular poetry and fiction—all departments very slenderly represented in the fifteenth century. Men evidently read for practical ends, and invested their money in the expectation of a substantial rather than an intellectual return. The class that now reads principally for amusement did not in that age read at all ; but if it had, books could not then be produced at the cheap rate



required to ensure an extensive circulation. If such books are costly, they must at all events be solid, to give the purchaser an apparent return for his money; or the expense must be distributed over a wide area by the agency of circulating libraries, an institution which implies a numerous reading public. Hence, a fact honourable to Renaissance literature, it includes hardly anything that can be called trash. Copious in the number of its publications, it is disappointingly meagre in their themes; many branches of human activity hardly exist for it, but, at all events, almost every one of its publications was produced in response to a real need. Most of them have inevitably become obsolete, few have ever been, or will be, utterly valueless.

The drawback to the generally sterling character of the early Renaissance printing was want of enterprise on the part of the printers, who were also the publishers. At the present day culture is greatly promoted by the ambitious and competitive spirit of publishers, who look far and wide for subjects likely to touch sympathetic chords in the breast of the public, are always ready to listen to new ideas, to which they frequently accord generous encouragement, compete among themselves for promising writers, and are continually devising new schemes to attract patronage by elegance, cheapness, artistic decoration, or the supply of some want which the public has not yet found out for itself. Very little of this is to be discovered in the fifteenth century. Publishers

seldom cared to transgress the safe ordinary round of classics, divinity, and law. Occasionally there are symptoms of alertness to the events of the day: thus, as soon as Cardinal Rovere becomes Pope, his treatises on the Redemption and the perpetual virginity of Mary are printed at Rome; and when the Jews are accused of murdering a Christian boy, circumstantial accounts of the tragedy appear in different parts of Europe. But, notwithstanding the intellectual curiosity of the age, it would seem to have been a very unpromising one for the literary manifestation of original genius of any kind. Works of contemporary authors, other than of a purely utilitarian character, are very rare. One of the most remarkable exceptions is the publication at Naples in 1476 of the "Novellini" of Masuccio, a book whose scandalous character would be sure to obtain it readers. Towards the end of the century, works by living authors of eminence became more frequent, but even then they are most commonly those of men like Sanazzaro, influential in courts, and enjoying literary distinction long before they went to press. One of the press's most important functions, the encouragement of unknown ability, was hardly performed at all in that age, and the principal reason was that the printers, though sometimes of classical acquirements, were either too exclusively commercial in their views or too limited in their resources to promote literary activity outside of the beaten track. Our own Caxton appears a model of intelligent adaptation to the tastes of his public,

but he never finds an author or exerts himself to give superior finish or elegance to a book. It cannot but be thought that if Italy had in the fifteenth century possessed a publisher of enterprising spirit and ample means, a powerful impulse might have been imparted to Italian vernacular literature. Such a person, indeed, would have perceived that the public for such a literature, apart from its few classical examples, did not then exist, but he would have deemed that the multitude of intelligent men who could not read Latin would read Italian, if Italian were put before them. Instead of hiring editors he would have hired authors, and his enterprise might have been attended by momentous consequences.

Another token of the lack of a far-seeing speculative spirit is the extraordinary period which elapsed before an Italian printer ventured upon the publication of a Greek book. The interest in Greek literature must have been very general, but instructors were probably scarce, and few Italians had taken the trouble to learn it. The educational value of the language, apart from the contents of the books composed in it, was utterly unsurmised, and the reader was fully satisfied if he could obtain a faithful Latin translation, which in the majority of cases was not yet to be had. Had printed Greek texts been placed in the way of readers, a vast impulse would have been given to the study of the language, and a publisher of genius, labouring to create the taste he did not find, might have greatly accelerated the course of European

culture. Greek grammar, even, awaited the typographer until 1476, and Greek literature for some years longer. No originality was infused into the business of publishing until the advent of Aldus, almost as much the father of modern bookselling as Gutenberg is the father of printing.

Leaving the question of what the Renaissance printers and publishers of Italy might have done, we proceed to illustrate what they did by a brief analysis of the character of their productions during the first few years of their activity, especially in Rome and Venice. The survey is necessarily very imperfect, for a large proportion of their productions are not dated, and the exact year is usually a matter of conjecture. We must confine ourselves to the list of dated books given by Panzer, which might admit of considerable extension. It is not likely, however, that this would materially affect the mutual proportion of the various classes of literature, the point with which we are principally concerned.

Printing was established at Rome in 1467 by the removal of Sweynheym and Pannartz from Subiaco. Five books are recorded to have been printed there in that year; two classics (Cicero's "*De Oratore*" and "*Epistolæ ad Familiares*"), two editions of the fathers, and one grammatical work. In 1468 six more make their appearance, one classical, three patristic, one theological, and one medical. In 1469 commences the great run upon classical writers, which continued for some years. Of the twelve books enumerated by Panzer as produced

in this year, all but one are classics, and the apparent exception is a defence of Plato by Cardinal Bessarion. All but one are printed by Sweynheym and Pannartz, with prefaces by the Bishop of Aleria as editor-general. This striking development of activity indicates the first organised attempt to monopolise a special department of the book-trade, which might possibly have succeeded if Rome had then, as now, been the capital of an united Italy. The other Italian cities, however, had no intention of being excluded from the practice of the new art, and the same year witnessed the introduction of typography into its true Italian metropolis, Venice, combined, however, with an audacious attempt to obtain a monopoly. Joannes de Spira, the first printer in Venice, not content with obtaining protection for his publications, claimed and obtained the sole right of printing books in the city for five years. Men had evidently as yet but little conception of the importance of the new art; but the death of the printer within the year released the Venetian State from the obligation it had so inconsiderately undertaken, and it was by this time sufficiently enlightened not to renew it in favour of his brother Vindelino, who, however, remained for some time among the most distinguished of Venetian printers.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It seems to have been afterwards sought to imply that Spira's monopoly was intended only to protect his copyright in books actually published by him, but the language of the original document is clear. It may be remarked that, did not other arguments abundantly suffice,

Before leaving the year 1469, we should mention the first Italian instance of a printed translation of a Greek classic, the Italian Strabo, published by Sweynheym and Pannartz without date, but which is known to have belonged to this year. In 1470 the run on classics continues, the same number as in the previous year being printed, mostly by Sweynheym and Pannartz, but a revival is apparent in other branches of literature, the number of books in theology being nearly equal to that of the classics. Another translation from the Greek appears, that of Plutarch's Lives, rendered by various hands, with the preface of J. A. Campanus. The most remarkable production of the Roman press for this year, however, is a small tract, which affords the first example of recourse to printing by a Pope for an official purpose. It is the brief of Pope Paul II., enacting that the Jubilee shall henceforth be celebrated every twenty-fifth year, and consequently in 1475, which he did not live to see. This interesting document has been recently acquired by the British Museum. In 1471, as is most probable, another Government publication appeared, "The Civic Statutes of Rome," as revised by Paul II.; and the election of his successor Sixtus, in the same year, produced the first two examples of official publications, afterwards very frequent, the congratulatory harangues

this transaction would prove the date 1461, in Nicolas Jenson's *Decor Puellarum*, to be a misprint, as if he had printed before 1469 he would have acquired a *locus standi* which could not have been ignored in Spira's favour.

pronounced by ambassadors upon occasion of their tendering homage to the Pope.

Twelve classical publications grace the year, mostly from the press of Sweynheym and Pannartz, as well as the first volume of their great edition of the "Biblical Commentary" of Nicolaus de Lyra. The remaining four volumes appeared in the year following, and the last was freighted with the memorable appeal to Pope Sixtus IV., composed by the Bishop of Aleria in the name of the printers, which throws so vivid a light on the vicissitudes of the book-trade in Rome. They have printed 12,475 sheets, *acervum ingentem*, for which it is marvellous that paper or types should have been found. Their spacious premises are choked with unbound sheets in quinions (*quinterniones*), but void of victual and drink. Will the Pope give them some little office, by aid of which they may be able to provide for themselves and their families? Rome was manifestly no place for classical publishers, even under a Pope who did so much for the encouragement of learning as Sixtus. The forlorn estate of Sweynheym and Pannartz, contrasted, as we shall see, with the flourishing condition of the Venetian book-trade at the time, shows that even at a period when reading, to say nothing of the scholarship required to master the literature of the day, was not a general accomplishment, the bookseller's best patron was the public. Probably, however, the hardships of the firm may have been somewhat exaggerated by the eloquent pen of the Bishop

of Aleria; for in this very year they appear as printing ten books, and in the following year seven. Two of these are new editions of works previously issued by them, showing not only that the original impression was sold out, but that it was thought profitable to undertake another.

In 1474 the names of the printers entirely disappear as partners. Sweynheym is known to have died before 1478 (when the Ptolemy, which he had begun to prepare for the press, was published by Arnold Buckingk), but at what particular time is uncertain. Pannartz comes forward by himself in December 1474, and in the following year he occurs as the printer of eight books, chiefly classical. In 1476 he prints three, but his activity abruptly terminates in March, a period coinciding with a collapse in Roman publishing, best illustrated by a comparative table :—

1475	53 books.	1478	15 books.
1476	24 „	1479	11 „
1477	14 „	1480	9 „

No doubt many undated books were published in these years, and after 1480 some revival is apparent, but the quality of the publication is greatly lowered, Classics continued to be printed, but they retire into the background before canon and civil law, and the apparent number is greatly helped out by ephemeral pamphlets, such as papal briefs and addresses on public occasions. The endeavour to render Rome an intellectual centre had manifestly failed, nor has she deserved this character



at any subsequent period, except for the few years during which wits and scholars gathered around Leo X. Before leaving the subject, nevertheless, a tribute should be paid to the merits of Joannes Philippus de Lignamine, a native of Messina, apparently a man of good family, and not improbably the first native Italian to exercise the typographic art, in whose productions may be traced rudimentary ideas of a higher order than were vouchsafed to his mercantile contemporaries. It can hardly be by accident that the same man who in 1472 prints the first vernacular book that had appeared in Rome, should in the same year publish, although in Latin, the first biography of an Italian contemporary, his own memoir of his own sovereign, Ferdinand of Naples; should in 1473 issue the vernacular poetry of Petrarch; and in 1474 a book of such national interest as the "*Italia Illustrata*" of Flavio Biondo. His publications are always of high quality, and it would be interesting to learn more respecting him. He is described as a member of the Pope's household, and was certainly something more than a professional printer.

The establishment of printing at Rome had naturally ensued upon the migration of the printers from the small adjoining town of Subiaco, and the choice of the latter place as the cradle of Italian typography had probably been determined by the German nationality of the majority of the inmates of its celebrated monastery. The introduction of printing into Venice, two years

after Rome, was probably less the effect of accident. Joannes de Spira, who, as we have seen, so promptly secured a monopoly of so much value as the exclusive exercise of printing for five years, must have been an enterprising and far-seeing man, to whom the opulence and comparative freedom of Venice would offer greater attractions than the doubtful patronage of an Italian despot. This view of his character is confirmed by the boldness of his first undertakings. Before obtaining any privilege he had produced two of the most voluminous works of antiquity then accessible—Pliny's *Natural History* and Cicero's *Epistolæ ad Familiares*. The soundness of his judgment was evinced by the demand for a second edition of his Cicero within four months, an unusual occurrence in the history of early printing. Tacitus followed, and the German printer's patriotism is indicated by his description of the Germania as "*libellus aureus*." His brother and successor, Vindelinus, displays even greater energy, producing fifteen books within the year 1470, among them so important a work as Livy's *History*, and gaining especial honour as the first printer of Petrarch. The rest are almost entirely classical, and so are the few books printed in this year by his rival, Nicolas Jenson, the most elegant of all the Italian printers. In 1471 Venetian printing takes a wider range; law books increase; Jenson produces books of morals and of religious edification in the vernacular; Christopher Valdarfer publishes the *Decameron* of Boccaccio. More important still is the appearance of two

independent Italian translations of the Bible, one from the press of Vindelinius, one without name of printer. As no other Italian city emulated the example of Venice, an example frequently repeated by her before the close of the century, we are justified in assuming that in no other Italian city could such a thing be done. Interesting too is a vernacular translation of Cardinal Bessarion's exhortation to the Italian princes to take arms against the Turk, showing a public for productions of contemporary interest, outside the ranks of those who could read Latin. In the following year, 1472, printed editions of no fewer than six classical authors make their appearance at Venice, Cicero's *Tusculan Questions*; Catullus, with Tibullus and Propertius, and the *Silvæ* of Statius; Ausonius, with a considerable appendix of minor poets; Macrobius's commentary on the "*Somnium Scipionis*," and the authors of "*De Re Rustica*." Although some of the cities dependent upon Venice—Padua, Treviso, Verona—were beginning to have printing-presses, their typographers were not equal to such undertakings, and Venice must have been the headquarters of production and distribution for her extensive and opulent territory, and probably for many of the neighbouring states. Her abundant capital and industry, liberal administration in non-political matters, and the confluence of strangers must be reckoned among the principal causes of this activity, to which Mr. Horatio Brown adds another, the abundance and excellence of paper, which the Venetian senate

had protected a century before by prohibiting the export of rags from their dominions.

The extent and growth of the Venetian book-trade will appear by the following notice of the number of works printed from 1469 to 1486, which would be considerably augmented if dates could be safely assigned to undated books :—

1469	4 books.	1478	64 books.
1470	22 „	1479	16 „
1471	48 „	1480	71 „
1472	36 „	1481	79 „
1473	28 „	1482	74 „
1474	40 „	1483	104 „
1475	37 „	1484	66 „
1476	52 „	1485	84 „
1477	55 „	1486	71 „

By 1495 the number of publications has risen to 119, the general character of the books remaining much as before. The productions of the Venetian press from 1469 to 1500 occupy more space in Panzer's catalogue than those of Rome, Florence, Naples, Milan, Bologna, Brescia, Ferrara, Padua, Parma, and Treviso put together.

Space allows only a brief glance at the typographical productions of the five most important of the seven Italian cities which possessed printing-presses by 1471 — Bologna, Ferrara, Florence, Milan and Naples. Bologna, as might be expected in a university city, especially produces erudite books, particularly in philosophy, mathematics, and medicine. Petrarch and Boccaccio, however, relieve the general aridity, and there is a fair

sprinkling of classics. Ferrara's taste lies much in the same direction, but it is remarkable for a school of Hebrew printing, and does itself honour by the *editio princeps* of Seneca's tragedies, and even more so by that of Boccaccio's "Teseide," the first publication of an Italian epic poem other than the "Divina Commedia." Florence appears more tardy in developing the new art than might have been expected under Medicean rule; and her early productions would seem comparatively unimportant but for Bettini's "Monte Sancto di Dio" (1477), the first example of a printed book containing copperplate engraving, and the famous Dante of 1481, partly illustrated in the same manner. The artistic eminence of Florence renders the production of this work within her precincts especially significant; and in 1490 a school of wood-engraving arises which surpasses the Venetian, and often confers great artistic value upon typographical productions otherwise of little account. Another interesting feature of Florentine typography, from about 1480 until the end of the century, is the number of original publications by native men of letters, such as Politian, the Pulcis, and, in quite a different manner, Savonarola. Florence understood the duty of encouraging contemporary talent better than any other Italian city; yet, although she was the Athens of Italy, and possessed its Pericles, the comparison between the extent of her typographical production and that of Venice shows that the public is the better patron. When, at a much later period, wealth and

public spirit departed from Venice to an extent which they never did from Florence, the lead passed to the latter city.

Milan is, for the first few years, principally devoted to the classics, upon which law and theology gradually gain ground. Its great glory is the first book printed in Greek — Lascaris's *Grammar*, 1476. Simoneta's "*History of Francesco Sforza*," put forth by the authority of Lodovico Sforza about 1479, is also a memorable book. Naples, where printing was never very active, does little for classical literature, but produce numerous works by local writers of distinction, from Archbishop Caraccioli to the licentious Masuccio. The number of Hebrew books is a remarkable feature.

This slight degustation — analysis it cannot be called — of the fruits of Italian Renaissance literature confirms the proposition with which we began, that it was far more utilitarian than that of ages often stigmatised as matter-of-fact and prosaic. The reproductions of classical authors were not in general stimulated by enthusiasm for their beauties, but by their utility, either for the information they contained, or as books for school or college. Outside their circle very little of a fanciful or imaginative character appeared, and this chiefly in the shape of impressions of vernacular authors, such as Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. Original genius was at almost as low an ebb as it has ever been, although a band of most gracefully accomplished men of letters surrounded Lorenzo de' Medici, and Ariosto and Machiavelli were growing up. In partial

explanation of this circumstance, it may be remarked that the fifteenth century, brilliant in its inventions and discoveries, was, in a literary point of view, one of the most unproductive periods in European history. Petrarch and Boccaccio in Italy, Chaucer in England, left no successors ; with the exception of Æneas Sylvius, it would be difficult to point to any writer of the first half of the century eminent by his achievements in elegant literature. Had printing been invented in the thirteenth century, or in the age of Elizabeth, we might have had a different story to record ; but it must now be said that for a long time it did little for the encouragement of genius, hardly even of high talent. Yet the age as a whole was by no means flat or prosaic, only its imagination was more powerfully attracted to art than to letters, and a spiritual charm is chiefly recognisable among its books in proportion as art has influenced them, whether in the design of exquisite type or of beautiful illustration. This utilitarian character of literature, as we have remarked, tended to discourage readers for amusement or for the love of letters ; and this in turn discouraged printers and publishers from any serious effort to provide vernacular reading. Literature accordingly remained for a long time the property of the humanists, which is as much as to say that it was imitative and not creative. The merits and defects of this excellent class of men cannot be better exhibited than by their attitude towards Greek. It was not one of indifference, they translated Greek authors into Latin with exemplary pains ; but they thought

this quite sufficient, and made no effort to render the originals accessible. They valued Greek authors for their information, not for their style, and had no idea of the value of the language as an instrument of education. A creative epoch was required for this, such as speedily came with the overthrow of the old order of Italy, with the discovery of America, above all, with the Reformation. No age can bestow so great a boon upon literature as the fifteenth century did by the invention of printing; but it was not an age in which the hero flourished conspicuously as man of letters.



## SOME BOOK-HUNTERS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

I FEEL that I owe an apology for presenting you with anything so scrappy and disconnected as the paper you are to hear to-night. Being unexpectedly called upon to fill a gap at a time when pressure of occupation prevented my writing anything requiring care or study, I bethought me of the story of the minister who, when about to officiate as a substitute for another, received at the same time a hint that the congregation were particular about quantity no less than quality, and that they would expect the length of his public exercises to attain the average of the regular incumbent. The absent gentleman was remarkable for fluency, the *locum tenens* was a man of few words. He did his best, but by-and-by found himself with a vacant quarter of an hour and a vacant head; when suddenly a happy thought flashed into the void, and he exclaimed, "And now, O Lord, I will relate an anecdote." I too in my emergency have taken refuge in anecdotage, and, in default of anything of my

<sup>1</sup> Read before the Monthly Meeting of the Library Association, London, April 1898.

own, I am about to bore or entertain you with some anecdotes of book-collectors of the seventeenth century, borrowed from that illustrious gossip and anecdote monger, Nicius Erythræus, with a brief account of whom I will preface my paper.

I scarcely think that I shall underrate the amount of information respecting Nicius Erythræus current at this time in this country by remarking that the name is probably best known as a pseudonym of Coleridge, under which his poem of "Lewti," a Circassian love-chant, was first given to the world, and most readers will have deemed his adoption of it a mere freak. I confess that I am myself unable to discover what Nicius Erythræus has to do with the Circassians, but it is not an imaginary name, being the Latinisation of that of Vittorio dé Rossi, an Italian Jesuit, who flourished during the last quarter of the sixteenth, and the first half of the seventeenth century, and, always writing in Latin, translated his vernacular appellation into that language. The circumstance of his having written in Latin is no doubt one principal reason why he is now so little remembered. He was one of the pioneers of a reviving form of literature, the anecdotic. Poggio Bracciolini had written a very popular book of anecdotes in the fifteenth century, but his tales are often mere Joe Millers, and not always authentic. Nicius's stories are *bona-fide* anecdotes or reminiscences of actual personages, with most of whom he had conversed. All roads, it is said, lead to Rome, and his position as an ecclesiastic about the Papal court, albeit a

hungry and discontented one (he had sorely prejudiced himself by a romance, the "Eudemia," in which he had made too free with the characters of influential people), brought him into contact with every man of mark who resorted to it, whether a denizen of Rome or a foreign visitor. His gallery of portraits includes two persons of much interest to Britain, John Barclay, Scot by descent if French by birth, author of the "Argenis"; and Teresa, the fair Armenian, who wedded our countryman Sir Robert Sherley, in his adventurous Persian travels. In my opinion he is a most entertaining writer, lively and animated, with a bright descriptive touch; an elegant Latinist, and though much given to relating stories which the subjects of them would have wished to consign to oblivion, he is at bottom very good-natured. His principal work is his "Pinacotheca," or Portrait Gallery, in three parts, each containing a hundred sketches of contemporaries, all people of some note, if only for their eccentricities, and many of whom, but for him, would now be utterly unknown. He doubtless retails much gossip at second-hand, but I do not think that he has invented anything, and I believe that we see his contemporaries in his pages much as they really were. For proofs, authorities, *pièces justificatives*, you must look elsewhere, and Nicius shuns a date as if it were the number of the beast.

Perhaps the most interesting of the particulars relating to library matters imparted by my author are those respecting a man second only to Grolier

as a patron of fine binding, but of whose personal character and habits, were it not for Nicius, we should know nothing. Every one interested in the bibliopagic art is more or less acquainted with the beautiful bindings executed for Demetrius Canevarius, physician to Urban VII., elected Pope in 1590, but whom all his leech's skill could not keep alive upon the Papal throne for more than twelve days. This certainly does not seem to have been the fault of the physician, who was, Nicius tells us, a Genoese of noble family, who condescended to the medical profession in the hope of becoming rich. In this there is nothing to criticise ; but unfortunately, avarice seems to have been his master passion, indeed his only passion, except the love of books, which has given him an honourable place in literary history. Having removed from Genoa to Rome, he soon obtained the confidence of many of the Cardinals, and became the most celebrated and opulent physician of his day. But his habits were most parsimonious ; he never, in his own house, says Nicius, tasted fowl or fish, or anything that any sumptuary law could have forbidden in any age. He lived by himself ; his meals, consisting of bread, soup, and a scrap of meat, were brought him by an old woman who never entered the house, and drawn up to the first floor in a basket. He bought his new clothes ready made, and his second-hand clothes from the Jews. As soon as he got any money, he put it out to interest, and when he got the interest upon that, he put it out again. The one exception to

this parsimony was the expense to which he went in buying books. Dry as pumice, says Nicius, in every other respect, in this he was most liberal; if you look, that is, to the total sum he expended, and not to the prices he gave for individual books. For he beat the booksellers down unrelentingly, and would carry off their books at much lower prices than they asked, notwithstanding their lamentations and complaints that they were going to be ruined. How could he achieve this? By the magic of ready money; the bibliopole found it better after all to part with the book at a small profit for money down than to keep it on his shelves till some one bought it and forgot to pay. Thus was Canevarius unknowingly a forerunner of the political economists, and an initiator of the principle of small profits and quick returns. Of the bindings which constitute his glory with posterity Nicius says nothing; but ascribes his prowess as a collector in great measure to a love of fame. No unworthy motive either, but it is likely that public spirit had quite as much to do with it; for Canevarius not merely collected the library which he expected to perpetuate his name with posterity, but bequeathed it to his native city of Genoa, and left by his will an annuity of two hundred crowns to a caretaker. It would be interesting to learn what became of the books and the pension; if the facts are not already upon record they ought to be investigated. From the preface to a posthumous work of Canevarius, published by his brother, it would almost seem that the family had some control over it, and

if so they may have dilapidated it. If the library, when transmitted to Genoa, contained all the elaborate bindings which are now esteemed so precious, it was a bequest of more value than could have been supposed at the time. Though stingy and covetous in his life, Canevarius was a benefactor to many at his death. He left, Nicius says, such a multitude of legacies, and such a host of minute directions to be observed after his decease, that his will was as big as a book. The ruling passion of parsimony remained with him, and he gave a remarkable instance of it in his last illness. "When," says Nicius, "ten days before his death, an old woman who had come to nurse him gave him an egg to suck, and then took a new napkin from a cupboard to wipe his lips; 'What mean you,' cried he, 'by spoiling a new napkin? was there never a tattered one in the house? Depart to the infernal regions!'" Yet even here Canevarius emerges victorious, for the disparaging biographer is constrained to admit that he *had* a new napkin.

The next chapter of bibliographical anecdote which I propose to cite from Nicius Erythræus is not derived from his Pinacotheca, but from his Epistles. It relates to persons of more importance than Demetrius Canevarius, to no less a man, indeed, than Cardinal Mazarin, and to the eminent French scholar Gabriel Naudé, then (1645) employed as his agent in collecting the first Mazarin Library, so unhappily destroyed and dispersed a few years afterwards by the hostile Parliament of Paris.

Naudé has deplored the fate of the collection in a book devoted to it, and Nicius, his intimate friend and correspondent, powerfully confirms the loss which letters thus received by his description of Naudé's exertions as a collector, in a letter he writes to Cardinal Chigi, Papal nuncio in Germany. After mentioning that Naudé had seventeen years before obtained great credit by a work "On the Formation of Public Libraries," and that Mazarin having laid the foundation of his library by buying that of a Canon of Limoges, consisting of six thousand volumes, Naudé had doubled this number by purchases within one year; he adds, "Finding nothing more to buy in Paris he went to Belgium, and there took the pick of the market; and this year has come to Italy, where the booksellers' shops seem devastated as by a whirlwind. He buys up everything, printed or manuscript, in all languages, leaves the shelves empty behind him, and sometimes comes down upon them with a rule, and insists upon taking their contents by the yard. Often, seeing masses of books accumulated together, he asks the price of the entire lot; it is named; differences ensue; but, by dint of urging, bullying, storming, our man gets his way, and often acquires excellent books among the heap, for less than if they had been pears or lemons. When the vendor comes to think over the matter, he concludes that he has been bewitched, and complains that he would have fared better with the buttermilk, or the grocer. Did you see our Naudé coming out of a bookseller's shop you

could never help laughing, so covered from head to foot is he with cobwebs, and that learned dust which sticks to books, from which neither thumps nor brushes, it seems, would ever be able to free him. I have seen multitudes of Hebrew books in his bedroom, so stained and greasy and stinking, that one's nose seemed damaged irrecoverably; they must have been disinterred from Jewish kitchens, smelling as they did of smoke, soup, cheese, pickles, or rather of a mixture of each and all these aromas. If he gives them a place in his library, he will undoubtedly bring in the mice; they will flock in from Paris and the suburbs, hold their feasts, convoke their parliaments, and deliberate on the ways and means of resisting the cats, their capital enemies. But, without joking, Naudé means that Paris shall have the finest public library in Europe."

I need not dwell further on the sad fate of this magnificent collection, nor remind you that Mazarin formed a second which, especially for one book's sake, has endeared him to many who know little of him as a statesman, and that little not always to his advantage. After hearing of his munificence and indomitable spirit in the collection of books, we may feel more reconciled to the first book ever printed in Europe being popularly associated with his name, although "Gutenberg Bible" would still be the more appropriate designation.

My next anecdote relates to a book-hunter not less enthusiastic and determined than Mazarin or



Naudé, but much less known to fame, unknown, in fact, were it not for our good Nicius Erythræus. Prosper Podianus, a Perugian, but living at Rome, cared, says Nicius, from his youth upwards but to find out who had written a book upon any subject, at what price it was to be had, and how he was to get it. His life was consequently spent in frequenting booksellers' shops and stalls, which latter seem to have become an established institution in Nicius's time, although, as would appear, the dealers were not always sufficiently civilised to have actual stalls, but merely strewed the books upon the ground. (It would be highly interesting could we ascertain when and where the art of printing first acquired sufficient development to make it practicable and profitable to set up a second-hand bookstall.) As Podianus really was a connoisseur, and knew well what he was about, he frequently picked up some precious volume for a trifle, and was far from imitating the conscientiousness of Giovenale Ancina, Bishop of Saluzzo. This excellent prelate, it is credibly reported, having observed a valuable book amid a pile heaped upon the ground, as above mentioned, on learning that it was to be had for a penny, turned short upon the bookseller, rated him soundly for his ignorance, and gave him a scudo. Different indeed from the conduct of a lady narrated to me the other day, who, seeing a copy of the first edition of George Meredith's Poems, commercially worth ten or twelve guineas, priced at two shillings, and knowing its value

right well, marched with it into the shop and beat the bookseller down to eighteenpence. I know not whether I more admire or execrate that woman.

Podianus could hardly be expected to emulate the magnanimity of Bishop Ancina, considering that if he had often had to give scudi for his books, he would have been reduced to the necessity of stealing them. He was rich, however, in a thrifty wife, to whom her husband's goings-on were an enigma and an abomination. Finding that remonstrances availed nothing, whenever money for housekeeping was absolutely necessary, she would lay hold of a book, and pledge it with the butcher or baker or candlestick-maker, when Podianus would be necessitated to redeem it somehow. He himself rarely dined and did not always sleep at home, being sure of free quarters from other bibliophiles, who hoped that he would one day bequeath them his library. At length he was persuaded to make a donation of it in his lifetime, on condition that the books should remain in his possession until his death. Either oblivious of this, or wishing to secure other patrons, he made another prospective donation of the books to the fathers of a certain monastery, who inscribed the record of his benefaction upon a marble tablet, to be put up in their chapel after his death. When this event took place, they swooped down upon the prize, only to find a still more recent beneficiary in possession. In their mortification they effaced the laudatory inscription from the tablet,

only leaving the initial letters D. O. M., which were commonly interpreted, *Daturis Opes Majores*—to those who shall leave us a more substantial legacy.

Nicius mentions one more mighty book-hunter, Cardinal Peranda, of whom, however, beyond the fact that he was enthusiastic and indefatigable in the pursuit, we learn nothing bibliographically memorable but his misadventure with a pet monkey, which, having got hold of the cotton stopper of the ink-bottle (for so I must render *gossypium* according to my present lights) saturated with ink, must needs employ it upon the most precious book in his whole library. An enemy of books this which has escaped the attention of Mr. Blades. I will conclude with an anecdote not strictly bibliographic or bibliopolic, but not unconnected with the special objects of our Association, inasmuch as it proves the use in Italy, early in the seventeenth century, of a minor invention serviceable to bookmen—blotting-paper. It is the story of Muzio Oddi, mathematician and engineer, who, though debarred from pen and ink, solaced his imprisonment at Pesaro by the composition of mathematical treatises, written on sheets of blotting-paper, at first by charcoal cut to a point, afterwards, having given more stability to his paper by pressing several sheets together, by a reed-pen dipped in ink made from charcoal and water, and kept in a walnut shell. Sir Edward Thompson has shown from an old record that blotting-paper was known

in England in the middle of the fifteenth century; yet sand was in more common use to a comparatively recent date. It is a remarkable circumstance that sand was used instead of blotting-paper in the Reading Room of the British Museum as late as 1838, and was then only discontinued on the representation of Mr. Panizzi that it got into the books. If, however, Oddi was able to procure so many sheets of it when he could not get writing-paper, it must have been common in Italy at the period of his imprisonment, which would probably be about 1620. I must not omit to add that this ingenious man made the compasses he required out of twigs of olive wood, that the books he composed under such difficulties were actually published, and that he was eventually liberated, and died in wealth and honour.

These few anecdotes from a restricted field of human activity may afford some idea of the opulence of Nicus Erythræus in humorous, and at the same time urbane gossip. He was a quaint, pleasant man, something between Pepys and Aubrey, not of the highest intellectual powers, but a fair judge of other men, a good scholar and Latinist, and with quite sufficient sense to know when a story was worth repeating. He has preserved much that would have been lost without him, and has made a sunshine in that very shady place, the Rome of the seventeenth century. His main defect, ornate prolixity when simple brevity would have been more appropriate, is the besetting sin of most

Jesuit prose writers. He seems just the sort of useful, entertaining, neglected writer, whom the presses of our Universities might advantageously reproduce, and the illustration of his text would afford congenial employment to an accomplished editor.

## LIBRARIANSHIP IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

THE natural reaction against over-statements respecting the darkness of the dark ages, has led to the counter-statement that they were not dark at all. We librarians know better. We know that they must have been in darkness, inasmuch as our body did not exist to enlighten them. There can have been no librarians where there were no libraries; and the lists of collections of manuscripts preserved to our times sufficiently prove that no set of men professionally interested in the custody of stores so diminutive can have been required. The function of librarian must have been one of the numerous offices discharged cumulatively by a single monk, upon whom it may sometimes have been imposed by way of penance. It was otherwise in classical antiquity. To say nothing of the Alexandrian Library, and its connection with men as distinguished as Callimachus and Apollonius, so late as near the close of the third century of our era the decree of the Emperor Tacitus, that the historical works of his illustrious namesake should

<sup>1</sup> Read at the Monthly Meeting of the Library Association, March 1884.

be transcribed and placed in the public libraries throughout the empire, indicates the existence of numerous institutions of this description, under responsible officers, servants of the State, or the municipality.

Almost all personal trace, however, of the famous librarians of antiquity has disappeared; but the interest attaching to the slow emergence of their modern representatives from the flood of ignorance and barbarism rivals that which the history of their prototypes would excite, could this be recovered. It would be interesting to know when and where in Renaissance, or post-Renaissance times, the accumulation of books first became so considerable as to demand the whole time of the officer entrusted with their custody, and thus to give birth to librarianship as a distinct profession. Into this inquiry I do not propose to enter. I wish merely, on the present occasion, to direct your attention to the evidence borne about the middle of the seventeenth century to the development at that period attained by librarianship, and the conception of its duties and possibilities entertained by John Dury, a man in advance of his times.

Dury was by birth a Scotchman, and by profession a divine. He had signalised his appreciation of libraries at an early age by repairing to Oxford with the object of studying in the Bodleian. He is entitled to figure on the roll of librarians himself, having been appointed deputy-keeper of the Royal Library after the execution of Charles I., which charge may very probably have suggested to him

those thoughts on the duties of librarians and the standard of librarianship, of which I am to give you an account. <sup>†</sup>The main object of his life, however, was the even more important but certainly less hopeful undertaking of allaying the acrimony of religious zealots. In pursuance of this mission we find him almost more abroad than at home; ever labouring to appease the dissensions of Protestants, now negotiating with Gustavus Adolphus, now with the Synod of Transylvania; now at Utrecht, now at Brandenburgh, now at Metz, where he submitted to the loss of his "great, square, white beard," as a peace offering to the prejudices of French Protestantism. He eventually, long after the Restoration, died in Hesse, where he was entertained and protected by the Regent. It is to be feared that nothing came of his well-meant endeavours but the witness of a good conscience and the blessing that rests upon peace-makers. It may, perhaps, have been inferred that he was not in all respects the most practical of men, and this, indeed, appears from his works on education rather than from his suggestions on libraries. But his utopianism was less owing to infirmity of judgment than to the habitual elevation of his moral and intellectual standard. He thought better of his fellow-men than they deserved, and was himself a man of eminent desert. If his own writings did not survive to speak for him, it would be sufficient to record that he was the intimate friend of Samuel Hartlib, the foreign guest to whom England is so greatly indebted as philanthropist and practical



agriculturist, and to whom several of his own treatises are inscribed.

The tract in which Dury published his ideas respecting the duties of a librarian is entitled "The Reformed Library Keeper; with a Supplement to the Reformed School, as subordinate to Colleges in Universities" (London, 1650). It appears with a brief preface by Samuel Hartlib, to whom the "Library Keeper" is addressed in the form of two letters, and who had already published Dury's "Reformed School," to which another portion of the tiny pamphlet is a supplement.

From the general drift of Dury's observations, it would appear that in his view, which was very probably correct, librarianship had in his day reached such a degree of development as to have become an independent profession, but not such a degree as to be a very useful one. It was necessary to have librarians, but librarians, as such, had not enough to do to constitute them very important or valuable members of the community. The remedy for this state of things was destined to come slowly, partly by increase of books, and even more by an increase of readers. We know that the profession at present finds ample employment for well-nigh all the energies of its most active members. This was far from the case in Dury's day, and being unable so to accelerate the march of intellect as to find sufficing occupation for the librarian, and at the same time hating to see a functionary potentially so important comparatively useless, he not unnaturally sought to provide him

with other vocations in which the more technical work of librarianship would have been merged. In so doing he anticipated the modern idea, especially rife in America, that the librarian should not only be a custodian and distributor of books, but a missionary of culture. Hence came the further idea that more being expected of the librarian more should be given him, and the office thus made worthy of the acceptance of men of parts and learning. Thus we find Dury, from a comparative outsider's point of view, coming to magnify the librarian's office and demand generous treatment for its incumbent, very much in the tone now held by the organs and representatives of the profession itself. It must be borne in mind that he speaks not so much in the interest of librarians as of the public; and pleads for them less in their capacity as custodians of books than with reference to the educational functions which he wishes to see superadded to their ordinary duties.

It will now be well to let him speak for himself.

"The library keeper's place and office in most countries are looked upon as places of profit and gain."

Rather a startling statement to us, who have been accustomed to look upon librarianship as under the special influence of the planet Saturn, which is said to preside over all occupations in which money is obtained with very great difficulty. It would seem, however, that mean as the prizes of librarianship might be, they were yet scrambled for.

"And so," he continues, "accordingly sought after and valued in that regard and not in regard of the service which is to be done by them unto the Commonwealth of Israel. For the most part men look after the maintenance and livelihood settled upon their places more than upon the end and usefulness of their employments. They seek themselves and not the public therein, and so they subordinate all the advantages of their places to purchase mainly two things thereby, viz., an easy subsistence and some credit in comparison of others, nor is the last much regarded if the first may be had. To speak in particular of library keepers in most universities that I know, nay, indeed, in all, their places are but mercenary, and their employment of little or no use further than to look to the books committed to their custody, that they may not be lost or embezzled by those that use them, and this is all."

Dury has, no doubt, here put his finger upon the main cause of the low condition of the librarianship of his day. The general conception of the librarian's functions was far too narrow. He was allowed no share in the government of his own library. He had not necessarily anything to do with the selection of new books, nor was it expected of him that he should advise and direct the studies of those resorting to the collections committed to his care. In fact he was not usually qualified for such activity, or even for the minor task of making these collections serviceable by means of catalogues and indexes. The development

of literature had advanced so far as to necessitate the library custodian, but had not yet produced the library administrator—the Denis and Audiffredi of the succeeding century. Dury saw this, and also saw that the ideal librarian he had conceived in his own mind would need better pay than he might do better work. One exception to his apparently sweeping statements must be noted. Bodley's librarians in the seventeenth century were undoubtedly men of high literary distinction. Yet even here the arrangements for the librarian's remuneration were unsatisfactory, and wrong in principle.

"I have been informed," says Dury, "that in Oxford the settled maintenance of the library keeper is not above fifty or sixty pounds per annum, but that it is accidentally *viis et modis*, sometimes worth a hundred pound. What the accidents are, and the ways and means by which they come, I have not been curious to search after."

So we are not to know by what shifts Mr. Nicholson's seventeenth-century predecessor mended his salary. "Hay and oats," says Dean Swift, "in the hands of a skilful groom will make excellent wine, as well as ale, but *this* I only *hint*."

Dury now proceeds to develop his ideas in a fine and wise passage:—

"I have thought that if the proper employments of library keepers were taken into consideration as they are, or may be made useful to the advancement of learning; and were ordered and maintained

proportionately to the ends which ought to be intended thereby, they would be of exceeding great use to all scholars, and have an universal influence upon all the parts of learning, to produce and propagate the same into perfection. For if library keepers did understand themselves in the nature of their work, and would make themselves, as they ought to be, useful in their places in a public way, they ought to become agents for the advancement of universal learning; and to this effect I could wish that their places might not be made, as everywhere they are, mercenary, but rather honorary; and that with the competent allowance of two hundred pounds a year [equivalent to about six hundred nowadays], some employments should be put upon them further than a bare keeping of the books. It is true that a fair library is not only an adornment and credit to the place where it is, but an useful commodity by itself to the public; yet in effect it is no more than a dead body as now it is constituted, in comparison of what it might be, if it were animated with a public spirit to keep and use it, and ordered as it might be for public service. For if such an allowance were settled upon the employment as might maintain a man of parts and generous thoughts, then a condition might be annexed to the bestowing of the place; that none should be called thereunto but such as had approved themselves zealous and profitable in some public ways of learning to advance the same, or that should be bound to certain tasks to be prosecuted towards that end, whereof

a list might be made, and the way to try their abilities in prosecuting the same should be described, lest in after times unprofitable men creep into the place to frustrate the public of the benefit intended by the donors towards posterity. The proper charge, then, of the honorary library keeper in a university should be thought upon, and the end of that employment, in my conception, is to keep the public stock of learning, which is in books and manuscripts; to increase it, and to propose it to others in the way which may be most useful unto all; his work, then, is to be a factor and trader for helps to learning, and a treasurer to keep them, and a dispenser to apply them to use, or to see them well used, or at least not abused."

This established, Dury proceeds to point out how the library should be made useful. His main idea is that a library should be a kind of factory, and it is astonishing how often he contrives to introduce the word "trade" into his proposals. Underlying this peculiar phraseology is the thought that so long as the library only exists for the advantage of those who may choose to resort to it, it is like a talent buried in a napkin; that to be really useful it must go to the public, and that the librarian must place himself in active communication with men of learning. It was hardly conceived in Dury's day that any but scholars could have occasion for libraries, but translating his proposals into the language of our time, it will appear that they contemplate such

an ideal of librarianship as is professed in America, and is realised with no small success in many of our leading free libraries. The first condition is a good catalogue:—

“That is,” says Dury, “all the books and manuscripts according to the titles whereunto they belong, are to be ranked in an order most easy and obvious to be found, which I think is that of sciences and languages, when first all the books are divided into their *subjectam materiam* whereof they treat, and then every kind of matter subdivided into their several languages.”

Evidently Dury was little troubled with the questions which have so exercised librarians since his time. “The subject-matter of which a book treats” is not always easy to ascertain. It might have puzzled Dury himself to decide whether his own tract should be catalogued along with books on libraries, or with the “Reformed School” to which it is professedly an appendix, and to which half its contents have a direct relation. The suggestion that books should be catalogued by languages was propounded before the British Museum Commission of 1849, and promptly dismissed as the fancy of an amateur. It would be curious to see Pope’s Homer in one catalogue, Voss’s in another, and the original in a third.

Dury next judiciously adds that room must be left in the library for the increase of books, an indispensable condition not always easy of fulfilment; and that “in the printed catalogue a reference is to be made to the place where the books

are to be found in their shelves or repositories." That is, the catalogue must have press-marks; in which suggestion Dury was two centuries ahead of many of the most important foreign libraries. It will be observed that he takes it for granted that the catalogue shall be printed, and in this he was ahead of almost all the libraries of his time, and until lately of the British Museum. In fact he could not be otherwise, for a printed catalogue is an essential condition of his dominant idea that the librarian should be a "factor" to "trade" with learned men and corporations for mutual profit. Hence he prescribes "a catalogue of additional, which every year within the universities is to be published in writing within the library itself, and every three years to be put in print and made common to those that are abroad."

The full plan of communication is unfolded in the following passage:—

"When the stock is thus known and fitted to be exposed to the view of the learned world, then the way of trading with it, both at home and abroad, is to be laid to heart both for the increase of the stock and for the improvement of its use. For the increase of the stock both at home and abroad, correspondence should be held with those that are eminent in every science to trade with them for their profit, that what they want and we have, they may receive upon condition; that what they have and we want, they should impart in that faculty wherein their eminence doth lie. As for such as are at home eminent in any kind, because they



may come by native right to have use of the library treasure, they are to be traded with all in another way, viz., that the things which are gained from abroad, which as yet are not made common and put to public use, should be promised and imparted to them for the increase of their private stock of knowledge, to the end that what they have peculiar, may also be given in for a requital, so that the particularities of gifts at home and abroad are to meet as in a centre in the hand of the Library Keeper, and he is to trade with the one by the other, to cause them to multiply the public stock, whereof he is a treasurer and factor.

“Thus he should trade with those that are at home and abroad out of the university, and with those that are within the university, he should have acquaintance to know all that are of any parts, and how their view of learning doth lie, to supply helps unto them in their faculties from without and from within the nation, to put them upon the keeping of correspondence with men of their own strain, for the beating out of matters not yet elaborated in sciences ; so that they may be as his assistants and subordinate factors in his trade and in their own for gaining of knowledge.”

Further instructions follow respecting the control to be exercised over the librarian, who is to give an account of his stewardship once a year to the doctors of the university, who are themselves, each in his own faculty, to suggest additional books proper to be added to the library. Dury seems to have no doubt that funds will always be forthcoming,

as well as for the librarian's "extraordinary expenses in correspondencies and transcriptions for the public good." It seems to be expected that he will frequently make advances out of his own pocket. Dury glides lightly over these ticklish financial details, which, however, remind him of the existence of a law of copyright, and the probable accumulation of accessions undesirable from the point of view of mere scholarship. His observations on this point are full of liberality and good sense :—

"I understand that all the book-printers or stationers of the Commonwealth are bound of every book that is printed, to send a copy into the University Library ; and it is impossible for one man to read all the books in all faculties, to judge of them what worth there is in them ; nor hath every one ability to judge of all kind of sciences what every author doth handle, and how sufficiently ; therefore I would have at this time of giving accounts, the library keeper also bound to produce the catalogue of all the books sent unto the University's library by the stationers that printed them ; to the end that every one of the doctors in their own faculties should declare whether or no they should be added, and where they should be placed in the catalogue of additional. For I do not think that all books and treatises, which in this age are printed in all kinds, should be inserted into the catalogue, and added to the stock of the library ; discretion must be used and confusion avoided, and a course taken

to distinguish that which is profitable from that which is useless ; and according to the verdict of that society, the usefulness of books for the public is to be determined. Yet because there is seldom any books wherein there is not something useful, and books 'freely given are not to be cast away, but may be kept, therefore I would have a peculiar place appointed for such books as shall be laid aside to keep them in, and a catalogue of their titles made alphabetically in reference to the author's name and a note of distinction to show the science to which they are to be referred." It seems then, that if Dury could have advised Bodley, and Bodley had listened to him, the Bodleian would have been rich in early Shakespeares, and might have preserved many publications now entirely lost.

Dury's second letter on the subject merely repeats the ideas of the first with less practical suggestion and in a more declamatory style. It contains a striking passage on the ruin of the library of Heidelberg, a terrible warning to librarians. It had books, it had manuscripts, but it had no catalogue, and its candlestick was taken away.

"What a great stir hath been heretofore, about the eminency of the library of Heidelberg, but what use was made of it? It was engrossed into the hands of a few, till it became a prey unto the enemies of the truth. If the library keeper had been a man that would have traded with it for the increase of true learning, it might have been preserved unto this day in all the rareties thereof, not so much by the shuttings up of the multitude of

books, and the rareness thereof for antiquity, as by the understandings of men and their proficiency to improve and dilate knowledge upon the grounds which he might have suggested unto others of parts, and so the library rareties would not only have been preserved in the spirits of men, but have fructified abundantly therein unto this day, whereas they are now lost, because they were but a talent digged in the ground."

Well said! and it may be added that one good reason for printing the catalogue of a great library is that, in the event of its destruction, it may at least be known what it contained. The greatest library in the world was within an ace of destruction under the Paris Commune: had it perished, the very memory of a large part of its contents would have been lost. Respecting Heidelberg, it should be remarked that the destruction was not quite so irreparable as would appear from Dury's passionate outburst. The books and manuscripts to a considerable extent went not to the Devil but to the Pope, though Dury probably could see little difference. But even the Pope did not ultimately retain them. No fewer than eight hundred and ninety MSS. were subsequently carried off by Napoleon, and being thus at Paris at the entry of the allies, were reclaimed by the Bavarian Government, and restored to the University of Heidelberg, with the sanction of the Pope, at the special instance of the King of Prussia.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Wilken, "Geschichte der Bildung, Beraubung, und Vernichtung der alten Heidelbergischen Büchersammlungen" (Heidelberg, 1817).

Appended to the tract is a short Latin account, also by Dury, of the Duke of Brunswick's library at Wolfenbuttel, famous on many grounds, and especially for having had Lessing as its librarian. It appears that on May 21, 1649, it was estimated to contain 60,000 treatises by 37,000 authors, bound in 20,000 volumes, all collected since 1604. It must therefore have been administered with an energy corresponding to the demands of Dury, who concludes his enthusiastic account with an aspiration which every librarian will echo on behalf of the institution with which he is himself connected :—

*“Faxit Deus, ut Thesaurus hic rerum divinarum æternarum sit et ipse æternus, neque prius quam mundi machina laboret aut intercidadat.”*

It will have been observed that Dury's suggestions have reference solely to university libraries. The conception of a really popular library did not then exist, and it may be doubted whether in any case even one so much in advance of his time could have reconciled himself to the idea of a collection where every description of literature, embodying every variety of opinion, should be indiscriminately accessible to every condition of men. But this very limitation of his views should render his admonition, and his lofty standard of the librarian's duty, more interesting and significant to the librarians of the nineteenth century. For if the advising function was rightly deemed so important in him who had to consult with university professors, men probably of more learning

than himself, much more is its judicious exercise required in him who has to aid the researches and direct the studies of the comparatively ignorant. "The Reformed Library Keeper," therefore, has a message for our age as well as its own ; and we need not regret the half-hour we have spent with good old John Dury, the first who discovered that a librarian had a soul to be saved.

## THE MANUFACTURE OF FINE PAPER IN ENGLAND IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

THE MS. correspondence of Conyers Middleton with Lord Hervey, acquired by the British Museum in 1885, contains, incidentally, evidence respecting the source from which fine paper, suitable for printing handsome books, was derived by English publishers until nearly the middle of the eighteenth century. Much of this correspondence relates to the progress of Middleton's "Life of Cicero," Lord Hervey, to whom the book was dedicated, and who had been zealous in procuring subscribers, frequently urging more expedition, and Middleton assigning various causes for delay. At last, under date of April 6, 1740, Middleton mentions one which he regards as for the time insuperable. War against Spain, it should be noticed, had been declared in November 1739, and Spain had at the time troops in Italy, and considerable naval strength in the Mediterranean.

"As to Tully," says Middleton, "I am ashamed almost to mention it, on account of a total cessation of the press from want of paper, occasioned by the uncertain return of ships from Genoa since the

commencement of the war, during which our large paper is exhausted, and not a sheet of it to be had in London till a fresh cargo arrives, which is expected, however, every day. The booksellers did not give me the least hint of this till it was too late to be remedied, knowing that it would vex me, as it really has done, yet there is no help but patience. But we may possibly retrieve this loss of time by employing several presses at once as soon as we get paper, since I have now finished all my part, and assure your lordship that there is not a subscriber so desirous to read as I am to get it out of my hands."

On April 27, Middleton repeats his assurance that "no one is half so impatient to read as I am to publish." This does not satisfy Lord Hervey, who writes on May 27: "I cannot, nor ought to conceal from you the general dissatisfaction and murmuring there is among your subscribers at the long delay of the publication of your work. I tell the story of the disappointment you met with in the paper, but am answered by almost everybody that this need not and should not hinder your publishing at least the first volume. I could wish that some way could be contrived, without you or your bookseller running any risk, to let the first part come out immediately. Could you not do it by a previous advertisement relating the misfortune of the paper, and saying whoever was willing to pay the second payment should have the first part delivered to them?"

Middleton replies on June 3: "As to the



publication, all I can say is that as soon as paper arrives, your lordship shall be master both of the time and the manner, so far as is in my power ; but until we get a recruit of paper, which has long been wholly exhausted, it is not possible to publish the first volume, since there are two sections of it still unprinted."

On June 17, however, he reports a change for the better : "Our paper arrived in the Downs last week, and is in port probably by this time, so that we shall now carry on our work with all possible vigour ; and if we cannot publish both the volumes in Michaelmas term, which my managers, however, promise me to do, I will undertake at least at all adventures for the publication of the first."

The work still did not progress. Middleton writes on August 24 : "I should sooner have paid my thanks if I had not been tempted to wait these two or three posts by the daily expectation of being able to send you some good news from the press, but I have the mortification still to acquaint your lordship that we have not printed a sheet since I saw your lordship, and though I wrote to my bookseller above three weeks ago to know what end we are to expect to this unaccountable interruption, yet I have not heard a word from him."

But on September 4 he reports himself at the end of his troubles, so far as concerns the supply of paper : "I could not omit the first opportunity of acquainting your lordship that we have received a stock of paper at last from Genoa, sufficient for finishing the first volume, *and have provided a*

*quantity also of our own manufacture, which is the better of the two*, for carrying on the second volume at the same time, which I have ordered to be committed immediately to the press, and hope that we may be able still to publish both the volumes before Christmas."

The book did, in fact, appear about February, 1741. An examination of the copies in the King's and Cracherode Libraries, British Museum, confirms the statements in Middleton's letters. The work is printed on two different qualities and descriptions of paper. By much the larger part of the first volume, extending in the King's Library copy to p. 472, sig. Ooo, and in the Cracherode copy to p. 464 (misprinted 264), sig. Nnn, but not including the dedication, preface, or list of subscribers, is impressed on a very fine thick paper, without name, date, or device, except two watermarks, frequently interchanged, resembling respectively an escutcheon and a *fleur-de-lis*. The remainder of the volume, and the whole of vol. 2, are executed upon a good, but thinner and inferior, paper, with no clue to the date or place of manufacture. The first leaf for which this new paper is employed is greatly stained in both copies, apparently from contact with the Italian paper, as the same is the case with the last leaf of the preliminary matter. Some other leaves are slightly stained, especially near the end. The leaves in finest condition are those of the dedication to Lord Hervey and the preface, which were printed last, and with which especial care would be taken. The portion of the first volume printed on the

English paper is not so considerable as Middleton seems to have at one time expected, consisting, instead of two sections, of only a portion of section 6, the last in the volume. It must be supposed that the paper "in the Downs" proved sufficient to carry the impression on to the point where the Italian paper fails. The difference between the thickness of the two papers is such that although vol. 2 has only 36 pages less than vol. 1, it weighs  $11\frac{1}{4}$  oz. less, or about  $\frac{1}{8}$ .

It appears unquestionable, then, that about the year 1740 English publishers depended for the execution of fine books upon paper imported from Genoa, and that the interruption of the supply from this quarter occasioned great inconvenience for a time, keeping an important book at a standstill for several months, but soon called the manufacture of fine paper into activity, as a branch of English industry. It would be interesting to know how long before 1740 this trade originated, and how long after that date it continued. It is scarcely likely that it flourished during the warlike times of Queen Anne; but it probably revived during the quarter-century of tranquillity which followed the Treaty of Utrecht. It is not probable that it long survived the development of the manufacture of fine paper in England. Though inferior to the Italian, the English paper was quite good enough to displace this if it had the advantage of superior cheapness, as it certainly must have had. Ample materials for deciding these questions probably exist on the shelves of the King's Library.

It should be mentioned that there was an impression of the "Life of Cicero" on small paper, but the great majority of the splendid list of subscribers prefixed to the work appear as subscribing for large-paper copies.

NOTE.—The writer might have remarked that Brian Walton, in the preface to his superb edition of the Polyglott Bible (1657) expresses, in a passage afterwards suppressed, his obligation to the Protector and the Council of State, for having remitted in his behalf the duty on paper; which is undoubtedly to be understood of a tax on paper imported from abroad.

## ON SOME COLOPHONS OF THE EARLY PRINTERS<sup>1</sup>

THE paper to which I am about to invite attention belongs to the class which Mr. Chancellor Christie has very justly entitled "haphazard papers," lying outside the proper work of the Library Association, and contributing little or nothing to promote it. It is written to recommend a slight literary undertaking which could not possibly find a place in the programme of our body. It can only plead that a certain variety has always been thought conducive to the interest of our gatherings; that it may be well to show that no province of book-lore is altogether too remote for our attention; and that a prolusion on an out-of-the-way subject may have, so to speak, a kind of decorative value; as a sprig of barberries, though nobody wants to eat it, may serve as garnish for a substantial dish. The little enterprise I have to recommend is the publishing, in a small volume, of such colophons, or attestations of the completion of a book by a printer, as belong to the fifteenth century, and possess

<sup>1</sup> Read at the Annual Meeting of the Library Association, London, October 1889.

individual features of interest, not being mere matter-of-fact announcements or repetitions from former productions of the same press.

There are two main sources of interest in the colophon—the biographical and the personal. Taking the former first, it may be remarked that for a long time the colophon supplied the place of the title-page. It would be impossible to give a catalogue of very early title-pages, for very early books had no title-pages. In his charming and beautifully illustrated papers on the “History of the Title-Page,” recently published in the *Universal Review*—which I strongly recommend to your perusal—Mr. Alfred Pollard, of the British Museum, tells us that the first English title-page is assigned to the year 1491. It had come into use sooner on the Continent, but the first example, which still requires to be definitely ascertained, was probably not earlier than 1476, or more than twenty years subsequent to the invention of printing. It was not until 1490 that title-pages became the rule, or until 1493 that the printer’s or publisher’s name began to be given upon the title. Up to this date, then, even when the book has a title-page, the printer or publisher can only be ascertained from the colophon, and before 1490 you must generally go to the colophon even for the description of the book. The reason is, no doubt, the extent to which the printer was influenced by the example of his predecessor, the copyist. It was more natural for the scribe to record the completion of his labours at the end of his manuscript than

to announce their commencement on the first leaf. In expressing his satisfaction and thankfulness on the last page he would naturally mention the name of the book he had been engaged upon, and hence his successor, the printer, inherited the habit of giving all information about a book not stated in a prologue or table of contents, at the end instead of at the beginning—in a colophon rather than on a title-page. The same custom had prevailed in classic times. The ancient title, when inscribed within the covers of the manuscript, was, says Rich, "written at the end instead of the commencement, at least it is so placed in all the Herculean MSS. which have been unrolled." Sometimes, however, it was written on a separate label affixed to the roll so as to hang down outside: and on the same principle it may be conjectured that when manuscripts came to be bound, much of the inconvenience occasioned by the want of a title was obviated by the title being written on the binding.

It must, nevertheless, seem surprising that so simple and useful a contrivance as a title-page should not have been thought of sooner. In one respect, however, the employment of the colophon for so long a period is not to be regretted. If the title-page is more practical, the colophon is more individual and characteristic. The title-page may tell us something of the character of the author when it is his own wording, but as a rule nothing of the printer beyond the bare facts of his locality and his existence. But into the colophon the early printer

has managed to put a great deal of information about himself. He often becomes, or at least ~~thinks~~ hires, a poet. He boasts, and generally not without ground, of his industry and accuracy. He usually records the precise day when his work was completed, and sometimes the exact time spent upon it. He sometimes, as in an instance quoted by Mr. Pollard, brings in a bishop to help his book with a recommendation.

All this is very interesting so far as it helps to make the old printers real to us. We would fain know more of men to whom we are so greatly indebted, and who, we are sure, must have been individually interesting. I will not say that this early age was the heroic age of printing, for the history of the art is fertile in examples of heroism down to this day; and perhaps the greatest man who ever exercised it—Benjamin Franklin—was a modern. But there certainly must have been a romance about the early days of printing not easily reproduced now. Romantic circumstances must have attended the flight of the first printers from the besieged city of Mentz, where the art had been exclusively carried on for so many years.

When we see how largely these German emigrants settled in Italy and France, and had almost a monopoly of Spain, we perceive that they must have been men of great enterprise. How did they overcome the difficulties that must have beset them as settlers in foreign countries? Is it not a fair conjecture that the difficulty of language was partly overcome by their being men of liberal education,



and speaking Latin ? Still they would have workmen to direct ; did they bring journeymen of their own country with them, or instruct foreigners ? The interest attaching to this question tempts me to a brief digression into a subject not properly comprised in my essay ; the colophon, so far as I am aware, throwing no light upon it. It seems probable that foreign printers were attended in their migrations by bodies of journeymen ; for in the privilege granted by the Venetian Senate in 1469 to Joannes de Spira, the first Venetian printer, he is said to have come to live in Venice with his wife, his children, and his entire *familia*. The *familia*, then, is expressly distinguished from his wife and children ; besides which the word never means in the classical writers, nor, so far as I can discover, in the mediæval either, family in our sense of kindred, but only in that of household : and as he is not likely to have brought domestic servants with him, must be understood to denote here the troop of workmen of whom he was the head ; who had evidently also immigrated with him. We are also told that a priest, Clemente Patavino, probably the first Italian who ever exercised the art of printing, taught himself by his own ingenuity, without having ever seen any one at work. From this we may infer that the presses were jealously guarded, and that the workmen were not Italians, or Clemente could not have been the first Italian to learn the craft. His first book was printed in 1471, several years after the introduction of printing into Italy.

Other interesting questions respecting the early printers remain which we should much like to have answered. Did they try to keep their art and mystery secret? Were they their own type-founders? Were their types cast near the scene of their labours, or transported from great distances? How did they set about obtaining the favour of the great men who patronised them? Was their discovery universally welcomed by the learned? or did some consider that books were low, and manuscripts alone worthy the attention of a self-respecting collector? Were they stunned by the objurgations of angry copyists? or endangered by any supposed connection with the black art? Were they in general their own editors and proof-correctors? and what were their relations with the scholars who aided them with annotations, or wrote dedications for their books? At a considerably later period we obtain most satisfactory insight into the economy of a great printing establishment from the memoirs of the house of Plantin, at Antwerp. For these early times, except for such information as may be derived from the accidental discovery of contracts and similar documents, we must depend upon hints gleaned from the books themselves, which are usually found in their colophons.

Neither my time nor yours would admit of my entering into the matter very deeply at present, but I have selected a few instances, entirely from books printed at Rome and Venice, which may serve to indicate what illumination colophons may

occasionally contribute to the obscurity of early typography, and sometimes to that of the manners and ideas of the times. And here I may remark incidentally, that the history of early printing is highly creditable to the age which fostered the art, and to those who exercised it, without, one may almost say, producing a single frivolous book for fifty years. An account of it mainly from the point of view of its contact with human life—the books which the early printers thought worth reproducing, the success of these, as attested by the comparative frequency of their republication, the proportion in which studies and professions, arts and trades, respectively benefited by the new discovery, would make a fascinating story in the hands of a writer of insight and sympathy. We have materials enough; it is now required to make the dry bones live.

In a colophon it will naturally be expected that among the sentiments more frequently finding expression, should be the printer's joy in his art, and assertion of its claims to admiration. Udalricus Gallus, of Rome, boasts that he can print more matter in a day than a copyist can transcribe in a year: "Imprimit ille die quantum non scribitur anno." The same printer tells the geese that saved the Capitol that they may keep their quills for the future, as the cock (*Gallus*) has cut them out. Joannes de Spira, the first printer established at Venice, declares that his first attempt has so far surpassed the work of the scribes that the reader need set no bounds to his anticipations; just as an

electric light company might advertise "Gas entirely superseded." He celebrates his type as more legible than manuscript :

"Namque vir ingenio mirandus et arte Joannes  
Exscribi docuit clarius ære libros."

Now the word *docuit* (*taught*) is not really appropriate to one who merely exercised an art he had learned from others. The question might be raised whether the reference is not to the inventor of printing, Joannes Gutenberg, and whether in this book of 1469 we have not the earliest testimony to his invention of printing. If so, this is indeed a precious colophon ; but I suppose it must be admitted to be more likely that Spira was thinking of himself, or that his poet was not over-discriminating in his praise of his employer. The point, however, is worth considering. Spira's brother, Vindelinus, enunciates the excellent maxim that the renown of a printer is rather to be estimated by the beauty than by the number of his productions :

"Nec vero tantum quia multa volumina, quantum  
Qui perpulchra simul optimaque exhibeat."

Nothing, indeed, is more characteristic of the early printers than the stress they laid upon accuracy. From another colophon we learn that an edition of Sallust at that early period consisted of five hundred copies. In another the same printer declares that he will deign to sell nothing that is not perfectly correct. In another

he talks of having carefully expurgated his author, as if he had been printing Jüvenal or Martial, but as the author is a divine the remark can only refer to the correctness of the text. John of Cologne goes further still, and asserts that his book is absolutely immaculate :

“Emptor, habes careant omni qui crimine libri,  
Quos securus emas, procul et quibus exulat error.”

Occasionally the corrector's name is mentioned. A remarkable instance of this is where Vindelinus de Spira prints an Italian book, the “Divine Comedy,” the language of which he probably would not understand, when Christoval Berardi, of Pesaro, is especially named as the corrector in an Italian sonnet probably composed by himself. In an instance of an arithmetical work the printer, Erhard Ratdolt, distinctly claims the merit of the correctness of the press as his personal merit, and we learn from other sources that he was a good mathematician.

Another class of colophon sets forth the deserts of the author instead of those of the printer, and it is noteworthy that these, when in verse, are generally expressed in a more elegant style. It is to be regretted that the verses written for Sweynheym and Pannartz, the fathers of the art in Italy, were generally so bad ; yet there is something to be learned from them. We discover that they thought it necessary to apologise for their uncouth German names (*Aspera ridebis Teutonica nomina forsā*) ; and that a Roman patrician named

Maximus—a man to be ever honoured for his public spirit—had given them and their press house-room in his palace. We learn from other colophons that an edition of Sallust consisting of four hundred copies, and that two editions of Cicero's Epistles to his friends, were carried through the press in four months. The comparative cheapness of typography is also a frequent matter of congratulation. It is said to have brought Virgil within the reach of all scholars, and to have enabled every man to be his own lawyer; but the printer seldom tells us what the price of the volume was. We observe that the trade of the book-producer has not yet become differentiated into the two great classes of printers and publishers. While, as before remarked, there is every reason to conclude that the early printers were persons of liberal education, we do not, so far as I am aware, find evidence of this mechanical craft being exercised by men of gentle blood. I have, however, already mentioned the priestly printer, Clemente Patavino, and a colophon reveals that the printers of one book were two priests. One rather wonders what became meanwhile of their religious duties. I suppose that a priest would not in general have been allowed to follow a secular calling, at least openly, but in this instance of printing there is no attempt at concealment. A circumstance honourable in its way to the craft to which we owe our existence, and suggesting that the ecclesiastical authorities of the fifteenth century thought of printers as our

friend Mr. Dewey rightly tells we ought to think of librarians.

Enough, perhaps, has been said to warrant the suggestion of a little book of colophons, bringing together what must now be laboriously hunted up from Panzer, Hain, and similar authorities. Its principal aim should be to collect whatever might illustrate the feelings with which the ancient printers regarded themselves and their art in the fifteenth century; but every colophon should also be given which throws a light on contemporary history and public feeling on any subject. I should, for instance, include that in which the peaceful character of Paul II.'s pontificate is recognised by the epithet "placatissimum," and any that conveyed a compliment to a king, doge, or any leading personage of the time. Such a little volume, tastefully executed, something after the pattern of Monsieur Müntz's delightful little book in the Vatican Library under Platina, would, I believe, be a favourite companion with many an amateur of ancient typography.

In conclusion, I may say a few words respecting what we are endeavouring to do at the British Museum for the illustration of early printing. Of the little exhibition of title-pages and colophons displayed at the Association's visit to the Museum yesterday, since you have all seen it, I need only say that the credit of collecting and arranging it is entirely due to Mr. Pollard, whose essay on the subject I have already recommended to your perusal. A more permanent collection is

contemplated, which I believe will be of substantial benefit to the study of ancient printing. When the requisite funds are procured, as it is hoped will shortly be the case, it is intended to provide additional glazed presses in the library, with the view of bringing together examples of every description of type used by a printer of incunabula, that is, of books produced during the fifteenth century. Mr. Aldrich, a gentleman deeply versed in typographic lore, to whom the selection of these examples will be entrusted, will arrange them as far as possible in the alphabetical order of the towns where the art of printing was exercised, keeping the works of each printer together. This collection, though not shown to the public, will always be accessible to experts. Its value to them is obvious, and we hope it will also be of material service in disclosing the numerous deficiencies of the Museum in representative specimens of early type, and prompting efforts to make them good. There is no idea of assembling together all the incunabula in the Museum, which would be impracticable for many reasons, but only representative examples of the various types. The foundation, however, of a general catalogue of incunabula has been laid in a manner which I have previously stated to the American Library Association, namely, by printing copies of the catalogue on one side only. When the catalogue is finished we shall, by merely cutting out the entries of any particular description of books, obtain a classed catalogue of the entire subject, among others, of our incunabula; this list



can be placed in the reading-room for general reference, and, if sufficient encouragement is forthcoming, be reprinted and published as a distinct catalogue, revised with the careful attention to minutiae which would be out of place in a general working catalogue like that of the entire library, but which may well be expected in a speciality. The standard of accuracy has risen, and bibliographers are dissatisfied with what many deemed excessive nicety when the Museum rules were framed. It is improbable that I shall have any concern with this catalogue of the future: if I had, I would ask the Trustees' leave to dedicate it to the memory of the man to whom we are chiefly indebted for this particular development of scientific cataloguing—Henry Bradshaw.

## ON THE SYSTEM OF CLASSIFYING BOOKS ON THE SHELVES FOLLOWED AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM<sup>1</sup>

THE purpose of this paper is to present a brief account of the system followed in the classification of books on the shelves of the British Museum library.

It will be understood that this does not amount to an enumeration of all the subjects which might suitably be recognised as distinct in a classified catalogue, but only of such as possess sufficient importance to occupy at least one book-press in the library.

Subjects which from a philosophical point of view might properly be separated, must in actual library arrangements frequently be combined for want of room.

It is further to be borne in mind that the classification now to be described does not in absolute strictness apply to the entire library, but to the acquisitions—comprising, however, nearly four-fifths of the whole—made since Sir Anthony Panizzi's accession to office as keeper of the printed books. The books in Montague House were indeed

<sup>1</sup> Read before the London Conference of Librarians, October 1877.

scientifically arranged on their removal to the new premises, but space was then wanting to carry out the views entertained by the officer principally entrusted with their arrangement—the late Mr. Thomas Watts, a gentleman of prodigious memory and encyclopædic learning. Mr. Watts subsequently obtained space more in correspondence with the comprehensiveness of his ideas, and the Museum library will bear the impress of his mind for all ages. With his name will be associated that of the late keeper, Mr. Rye, for many years his coadjutor, and whose own independent arrangement of the Grenville library and the reference-library of the reading-room will always be cited as models for the disposition of limited collections. I trust to be excused this brief reference to gentlemen prematurely lost to our profession—the former by death, the latter by indisposition, brought on, it is to be feared, by over-application to his official duties. To the example of the former and the instruction of the latter I am indebted for whatever claim I may have to address you on a subject to which I can contribute little of my own.

The classification of a great library is equivalent to a classification of human knowledge, and may, if men please, become the standard or symbol of conflicting schools of thought. It might, for example, be plausibly maintained that knowledge, and therefore the library, should begin with the definition of man's relation to the unseen powers around him—that is, with Natural Theology. Or with man himself as the unit of all things human—

that is, with Anthropology. Or, on Nature's own pattern, with the most rudimentary forms of existence. Hence, as we heard yesterday from the distinguished gentleman who here represents the fifth part of the world, the reading-room library at Melbourne begins with works on the subject of Sponges. Fortunately for the neutral bibliographer, there exists a book which not only holds in civilised countries a place unique among books, but which has further established its claim to precedence by the practical test of being the first to get itself printed. The Museum classification accordingly begins with the Bible, and I venture to express the opinion that every sound classification will do the same.

When the next question emerges, how to arrange the Bible itself, we alight at once upon a few simple principles, which, with the necessary modifications, will prove applicable throughout. It is obvious that entire Bibles should precede parts of Bibles; that originals should precede translations; the more ancient originals, the more recent; and Bibles in both the original tongues those in one only. We thus obtain the following arrangement at starting: Polyglots, Hebrew Bibles, Greek Bibles. It is equally apparent that Greek cannot be fitly succeeded by any tongue but Latin; that Latin is most naturally followed by its modern derivatives; that these draw after them the other European languages in due order; the Slavonic forming a link with the Oriental, which in their turn usher in the African, American, and Polynesian.

Concordances, consisting of the words of the Bible detached from their context, form a convenient link with Commentaries. The latter fall into two principal sections, according as they relate to Scripture in its entirety or to some particular part. In arranging the former, the erudite labours of scholars are, as far as possible, kept apart from the popular illustrative literature of modern days. The order of commentaries on separate books must, of course, correspond with that of the books themselves in the canon of the Bible.

Next succeeds the very important class of literature representing the Bible in contact with society through the medium of the Church. The most obvious form of this relation is the liturgical. Liturgies accordingly succeed Scripture in the Museum arrangement, precedence being given to the various Churches in the order of their antiquity. A minor but very extensive class of Liturgy, the Psalm and Hymn, naturally follows as an appendix, preceding Private and Family Devotion, which prefaces works on liturgical subjects in general. The next great department of this class of literature ensues in the shape of Creeds and Catechisms. These pass into formal expositions of dogmatic theology, including theological libraries ; which lead to the collected works of divines, commencing with the Fathers. The same order is observed here as in the arrangement of the Bible in its various languages : the Greek Fathers leading to the Latin, the Latin to the divines of the nations speaking languages derived from the Latin, and

these to the Teutonic nations, a division practically equivalent to one into Catholic and Protestant. The general theological literature of each nation follows in the same order, excluding works treating of special theological questions, but including all the immense mass of printed material relating to the Reformation and the controversies resulting from it down to the present day. With these the subject of General Theology may be deemed concluded, and we enter not only upon a fresh department, but upon a fresh numeration. The book-presses embracing the subjects hitherto described all bear numbers commencing with 3000. With the new department 4000 commences, and the same remark, *mutatis mutandis*, is applicable to every succeeding principal division. I must pass very lightly over the numerous sections of this second section. Beginning with the fundamental questions of the being of a God and the truth of Christianity, it embraces every special question which has formed the subject of discussion among Christians, in the order which commended itself as most logical to the original designer of the arrangement. These controversies conduct to the common ground of Religious Devotion and Contemplation, including the important departments of Tracts and Religious Fiction; and these to devotion in its hortatory form—*i.e.*, Sermons, classified on the same linguistic principle as Scripture, and divided into the great sections of collected discourses and separate sermons. With these the subject of specifically Christian Theology terminates, and is

succeeded by the great and growing department of Mythology and non-Christian Religion. Judaism follows, leading by an easy transition to Church History. A few words on the arrangement of this section will save much repetition, as the principle here exemplified is never departed from. It demonstrates the advantage of beginning with a subject like the Bible, respecting the correct arrangement of which there can be no dispute, and which serves as a norm for all the rest. As the Bible necessarily commenced with Polyglots, so Church History begins with General Church History; the various nations succeed in their linguistic, which is practically also their geographical order, provision being, of course, made for the intercalation of sub-sections where necessary, as for instance one on English Nonconformity. Polynesia, as the last member of this arrangement, naturally introduces the next subject—Missions—which in turn brings on Religious Orders, including Freemasonry. Religious Biography follows, arranged on the same principle as Religious History, which is always carried out wherever practicable. Finally, the whole class is concluded by the small but important division of Religious Bibliography.

Divine Law is evidently most fitly succeeded by Human Law, or Jurisprudence. The fulness with which the preceding section has been treated will enable me to pass very cursorily over this and its successors. I may be pardoned, however, one remark suggested by the introduction of a new

division—that in the classification of a library it should be considered whether the scope of the collection is special or general. In arranging a mere collection of Law Books it would be proper to commence with works treating of the general principles of Jurisprudence. In arranging a great library, regard must be had to the harmonious connection of the parts, and accordingly the Museum arrangement commences with Ecclesiastical Law as the natural sequel of Theology. Bulls, Councils, Canon-Law and Modern Church-Law introduce the great section of Roman Law. Oriental Law follows, the Laws of the Continental Nations succeed in the order previously explained, and thus room is only found for General Jurisprudence at a comparatively late period, at the beginning of the numeral series 6000. It brings after it such minor subjects as Prison-Discipline and Forensic Medicine. The remaining space of the section is occupied by the Law of the English-speaking nations, which requires most minute subdivision.

Next to Divinity and Law, the third rank among the pursuits of the human mind was anciently assigned to Medicine. We have learned to recognise that Medicine, however practically important, ranks scientifically only as a department of Biology. The next section, accordingly, commences with general Natural History, continuing through the natural kingdoms of Botany, Geology, and Zoology, including Veterinary Surgery, with their appropriate subdivisions, and then



embracing Medicine—first in its general aspect, as medical principle and practice; then in its great leading divisions of Physiology, Pathology, Therapeutics, &c.; again, as Special Pathology; finally, in such comparative minutiae as professional controversies and bills of mortality. The divisions of Art—the next class—are simple and obvious. They may be enumerated as Archæology, Costumes, Numismatics, Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, first as treated collectively, and then as treated separately; and, finally, Music. Fine Art is succeeded by Useful Art, and the interval bridged over by Field-Sports, Games of Chance, and Games of Skill. No subdivision of the Useful Arts has been attempted beyond the separation of Cookery and Domestic Economy from the rest, and the addition of two special sections, one for the catalogues of industrial exhibitions, the other for the voluminous and important publications of the South Kensington Museum.

The extensive and miscellaneous division which succeeds may, perhaps, best be defined under the head of Philosophy, alike in its scientific principles and in its application to human life. Commencing with Political Philosophy, or the Science of Government, it runs rapidly through the politics of the various nations, in the geographical order previously detailed, passes into Political Economy, with the allied subjects of Finance, Commerce, and Social Science; thence into Education, and, by the minor morals so intimately allied with the latter subject, into Ethics, including works on the

condition of Woman, Peace, Temperance, and similar topics. Speculative Philosophy succeeds, introducing Mathematics, on which hangs the great department of Applied Mathematics, including all physical sciences except the biological. The various branches are carefully discriminated, and room is found among them for the so-called Occult Sciences, and for Military and Naval matters, the series appropriately concluding with Chemistry, or the science which aims at the resolution of all matter into its original elements. The remaining sections, though most important and extensive, are very simple in arrangement, and may be dismissed very briefly. They are : History ; Geography, with Voyages and Topography ; Biography ; Poetry and the Drama ; Belles Lettres, including Fiction ; and Philology. The arrangement is invariably the same: collected works on each subject being placed first, and a geographical order being adopted for the rest when the conditions of the case allow. Genealogy is regarded as an appendix to History ; Letters to Biography ; Elocution, with Literary Criticism and Bibliography, to Poetry and the Dramatic Art. The class of Belles Lettres is headed by Libraries and Cyclopædias.

It should be stated that the system here explained refers in the strictest sense only to works complete in themselves, and not to Periodicals, Academical Publications, and State Papers, which are placed separately. Although, however, these constitute distinct series, the principle of classification is practically identical. The same remarks apply to

the Oriental departments of the collection, the Grenville library, and the reference-library of the reading-room.

Such is, in its main features, the system of book-press arrangement which I have undertaken to describe. I have no fear but that it will be pronounced in essentials logical and philosophical. It has undoubtedly proved eminently convenient in practice. That it should be open to revision on some points is inevitable from the nature of things, and from two circumstances more especially—its gradual development as subject after subject was added to the library, and the degree in which it represents the idiosyncrasy of a single mind. Some minor oversights must be admitted. Geology, for example, should unquestionably have preceded Botany. I venture more extensive criticisms with hesitation, yet I cannot help remarking that I perceive no valid reason for the severance of so manifest a branch of History as Biography from the parent stem by the intrusion of the entire department of Geography; while it appears to me that the Useful Arts would have formed, through Domestic Economy, a more natural sequel to Medicine than Fine Art, and in arranging the latter department I should have assigned the last instead of the first place to Archæology and its allied subjects. Forensic Medicine might also have been conveniently placed at the *end* of Law, to connect that subject with Natural Science. I should further feel much inclined to form a class for Encyclopædias immediately after Philology; both because

dictionaries of general knowledge seem legitimate successors to dictionaries of languages, and that the end of the classification might be answerable in dignity to the beginning. I am aware how much room for diversity of opinion may exist on these and similar points. On a more serious defect there can be no difference of opinion, but it is a defect inherent in all finite things. In an ideal classification by book-press one separate press, at least, would be provided for each subject, however minute. But an ideal library would also have room for each subdivision. We cannot have the ideal classification without the ideal library, and, although I hazard nothing in saying that, thanks to the genius of the designer, Sir Anthony Panizzi, economy of space in the new buildings of the Museum has been carried to the utmost extent conceivable, space is still insufficient to provide a distinct niche for every well-marked division of a subject. Upwards of five hundred such subdivisions are provided for; nevertheless this large number is not exhaustive. Without such an exhaustive distribution, the actual classification on the shelves, which is all I have undertaken to describe here, can never be conterminous with the ideal classification of the study. If, however, the Museum library has been unable to achieve an infinity of space, it has secured a practically indefinite numerical expansiveness by the elastic system referred to in our President's address, in further illustration of which I may be allowed a few words. On the removal of the books from

Montague House, about 1838, the cumbrous and antiquated, but I imagine then nearly universal system of press-notation by Roman letters was exchanged for one by Arabic numerals.<sup>1</sup> These numbers were nevertheless consecutive, and thus no space was left for insertions. Supposing, for example, that you have three presses standing together, numbered 1, 2, and 3, and respectively occupied by Botany, Horticulture, and Agriculture, it is clear that when your press of Botany is full, you must either duplicate your No. 1, or commence your subject afresh with No. 4. Mr. Watts, however, set his numbers loose, leaving a set of spare numbers after each, for future employment, proportioned to the probable extent of the subject. Thus, in the case supposed, while his Botany would still have been 1, his Horticulture might have been 10, and his Agriculture 15. When more room is wanted for Botany, the other two subjects are moved one press farther on, leaving the press formerly occupied by Horticulture vacant for the Botanical additions. The numbering of the presses is altered, but not the numbering of the books, and the catalogue is not interfered with. The respective subjects thus never get out of due numerical succession; and when, on the opening of the new library in 1857, the books thus numbered were brought from their former confined quarters, and

<sup>1</sup> It deserves to be recorded that at this period, and for some time afterwards, books were not labelled externally, but merely press-marked inside the covers. When labels were introduced, at the suggestion of Mr. Winter Jones, the printing of the first set cost £800.

spread over a far larger area, the removal was effected without the alteration of a single press-mark. As the books in any one press may thus come to occupy another, it is, as observed by Mr. Winter Jones, essential that all presses should be exactly of the same dimensions.

There is one incidental circumstance connected with the Museum press-arrangement of such importance that I may hope to be allowed a few words respecting it, although I adverted to it in the course of the discussion yesterday. I allude to the fourth copy of the catalogue. It is generally known that the titles of books catalogued at the Museum are transcribed trebly on carbonic tissue-paper by a manifold writer, and that the catalogue is thus kept up in triplicate. But I suspect it was not generally known until the delivery of the President's address that a fourth copy is taken at the same time. These fourth slips are kept in boxes, and then arranged, *not* in alphabetical order as in the catalogue, but according to the position of the books upon the shelves. Now, as each shelf is restricted to a single subject, it follows that an arrangement by shelves is tantamount to an arrangement by subjects—that is, a classed catalogue. A great deal, of course, remains to be done both in the way of subdivision and of incorporation; it is nevertheless the fact that—thanks to the foresight of Sir Anthony Panizzi and Mr. Winter Jones—the foundation of a classed Index to Universal Literature has been laid by simply putting away titles as fast as transcribed, without the nation having hitherto incurred any

cost beyond that of the pasteboard boxes. The apparently gigantic task being thus far simplified, I earnestly trust that public aid may be forthcoming for its completion, ere the accumulation of titles shall have rendered it too arduous. Fully sympathising with our friend Mr. Axon's wish to see the Museum Catalogue in print, I am yet averse to attempting to print it just as it stands: in the first place, because I regard the undertaking as beyond our strength; and in the second place, because, although such a catalogue would tell the student at a distance what books by particular *authors* were in the library, it would not tell him what books on particular *subjects* existed there; the latter, as it appears to me, being the more urgent necessity of the two. I should therefore be inclined to recommend the preparation of an abridged classified index, compiled from the fourth-copy slips I have been describing, and its publication from time to time in sections severally complete in themselves, as affording the best means for a gradual solution of the problem. Most of these sections, I have little doubt, would by their sale nearly repay the expense of publication, which a complete alphabetical catalogue of the library certainly would not. These remarks, it will be perceived, coincide with those made yesterday by Mr. Vickers, which struck me as eminently sensible and practical.

I have prepared a list of the subjects comprised in the classification of the Museum, which I put in for your examination. For a list of the principal systems proposed for the classification of libraries,

I may refer to Petzholdt's "*Bibliotheca Bibliographica*." It is in so far deficient that it necessarily contains no reference to the recent labours of our American friends and colleagues, who, coming to the subject with unbiased minds and an inventive ingenuity and fertility equalled by no other nation, have already done so much to advance the frontiers of the librarian's science.



## SUBJECT-INDEXES TO TRANSACTIONS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES<sup>1</sup>

WE all remember the excellent paper read at the Oxford Conference by Mr. J. B. Bailey, sub-librarian at the Radcliffe Library, upon the advantage of a subject-index to scientific periodicals. Mr. Bailey spoke with just praise of the splendid alphabetical catalogue issued by the Royal Society, but observed that from the nature of the case this is "nearly useless in making a bibliography of any given subject, unless one is familiar with the names of all the authors who have written thereon." This is manifestly the case. As an illustration both of the value and the deficiencies of the Royal Society's index, I may mention that while on the one hand it has enabled me to discover that my father, chiefly celebrated as a philologist, has written a paper on the curious and perplexing subject of the formation of ice at the bottoms of rivers, the existence of which was wholly unknown to his family, it does not on the other hand assist me to ascertain, without a most tedious search, what

<sup>1</sup> Read at the March Monthly Meeting of the Library Association of the United Kingdom, and published in *Nature*, October 9, 1897.

other writers may have investigated the subject, or, consequently, how far his observations are in accordance with theirs. Multiply my little embarrassment by several hundred thousand, and you will have some idea of the amount of ignorance which the classified index suggested by Mr. Bailey would enlighten. We may well believe that the only objection he has heard alleged is the magnitude of the undertaking, and must sympathise with his conviction that, granting this, it still ought not to be put aside, merely because it is difficult. I hope to point out, however, that so far as concerns the scientific papers, to which alone Mr. Bailey's proposal relates, the difficulty has been over-estimated, that the literary compilation need encounter no serious obstacle, and that the foundation might be laid in a short time by a single competent workman, such as Mr. Bailey himself. Of an index to literary papers I shall speak subsequently; and, there, I must acknowledge, the difficulties are much more formidable. But as regards scientific papers, it appears to me that the only considerable impediment is the financial. When the others are overcome, then, and not till then, we shall be in a favourable position for overcoming this also. The reason why the formation of a classified index to scientific papers is comparatively easy, is that the groundwork has been already provided by the alphabetical index of the Royal Society. We have the titles of all scientific papers from 1800 to 1865 before us, and shall soon have them to

1873. Though it might be interesting, it is not essential to go further back. We have now to consider how best to distribute this alphabetical series into a number of subject-indexes. To take the first step we merely require a little money (the first condition of success in most undertakings), and some leisure on the part of a gentleman competent to distinguish the grand primary divisions of scientific research from each other, and avoid the errors which cataloguers have been known to commit in classing the star-fish with constellations, and confusing Plato the philosopher with Plato a volcano in the moon. I need only say that very many of our body would bring far more than this necessary minimum of scientific knowledge to the task. I may instance Mr. Bailey himself. The money would be required to procure two copies of the alphabetical index (which, however, the Royal Society would very likely present), and to pay an assistant for cutting these two copies up into strips, each strip containing a single entry of a scientific paper, and pasting the same upon cardboard. It would be necessary to have two copies of the alphabetical catalogue, as this is printed on both sides of the paper; and as the name of the writer is not repeated at the head of each of his contributions, and would therefore have to be written on the card, close supervision would be required, or else a very intelligent workman. When this was done, the entire catalogue would exist upon cards, in a movable form instead of an immovable. The work of the arranger or arrangers would now begin. All

that he or they would have to do would be to write somewhere upon the card, say in the left hand upper corner, the name of the broad scientific division, such as astronomy, meteorology, geology, to which the printed title pasted upon the card appertained, and to put each into a box appropriated to its special object, preserving the alphabetical order of each division. We should then have the classed index already in the rough, at a very small relative expenditure of time, money, and labour. For the purposes of science, however, a more minute subdivision would be necessary. Here the functions of our Council would come into play, and it would have a great opportunity of demonstrating its usefulness as an organising body by inducing, whether by negotiation with individuals or with scientific corporations like the Royal Society, competent men of science to undertake the task of classifying the papers relating to their own special studies. Men of science, we may be certain, are fully aware of the importance of the undertaking, which is indeed designed for their special benefit; and although they are a hard-worked race, I do not question that a sufficient number of volunteers would be forthcoming. When one looks, for example, at the immense labour of costly and unremunerated research undertaken by a man like the late Mr. Carrington, one cannot doubt that men will be found to undertake the humbler but scarcely less useful and infinitely less onerous task of making the discoveries of the Carringtons

generally available. I am sure, for instance, that such men as Mr. Knobel and Mr. Carruthers would most readily undertake the classification of the astronomical and the botanical departments respectively, provided that their other engagements allowed; as to which, of course, I cannot affirm anything. Supposing our scientific editors found, they would proceed exactly in the same manner as the editor who had already accomplished the classification in the rough. Each would take the cards belonging to his own section, and would write opposite to the general subject-title written by the first classifier the heading of the minor sub-section to which he thought it ought to be referred; thus, opposite Botany—Lichen, and so on. He would then put the title into the box or drawer belonging to its sub-section, and when the work was complete, we should have the whole catalogue in a classified form, digested under a number of sub-headings. Some preliminary concert among the scientific editors would, no doubt, be necessary, and a final revision in conformity with settled rules. It might be questioned, for example, whether a dissertation on camphor properly belonged to botany, chemistry, or *materia medica*; whether the subject of the gymnotus was ichthyological, anatomical, or electrical; whether in such dubious cases a paper should be entered more than once. It would save time and trouble if these points could be determined before the classification in the rough was commenced; in any case considerable delay from unavoidable causes

must be anticipated. It is to be remembered, on the other hand, that the work could under no circumstances be completed until the publication of the Royal Society's alphabetical index of papers from 1865 to 1873 was finished, which, I suppose, will not be the case for two or three years. There will, therefore, be sufficient time to meet unforeseen causes of delay. If the classified index could be ready shortly after the alphabetical, if we could show the world that the work was not merely talked about as desirable, but actually done in so far as depended upon ourselves and the representatives of science; that it already existed in the shape of a card catalogue, and needed nothing but money to be made accessible to everybody—then we should be in a very different position from that which we occupy at present. I cannot think that so much good work would be allowed to be lost. The catalogue, not being confined to papers in the English language, would be equally useful in every country where science is cultivated, and would find support all over the civilised world. Either from the Government, or from learned societies, or the universities, or the enterprise of publishers, or the interest of individual subscribers, or private munificence, means would, sooner or later, be forthcoming to bring the work out, and thus erect a most substantial monument to the utility of our Association. It would obviously be important to provide that scientific papers should be indexed not only for the past, but for the future. If, as I trust, the Royal Society intends

to continue the publication of its alphabetical index from time to time, the compilers of the classified index will continue to enjoy the same facilities as at present. There must be some very effectual machinery at the Society for registering new scientific papers as they are published. What it is we may hope to learn from our colleague, its eminent librarian, who must be the most competent of all authorities on the subject. Mr. Bailey draws attention to several scientific periodicals as useful for bibliographical purposes, and I may mention one which seems to be very complete.<sup>1</sup> It is published at Rome. The number for last December, which I have just seen, is so complete that, among a very great number of scientific papers from all quarters, it records those on the telephone and the electric light, in the "Companion to the British Almanac," which, I think, had then been only announced here, not published, omitting the other contributions as non-scientific. It further gives a complete index to the contents of the *Revista Cientifica*, a Barcelona periodical, which had apparently just reached the editor, from its commencement in the preceding April. By this list I learn that the electric pen, the subject of our colleague Mr. Frost's recent paper, had been the theme of a communication to a Barcelona society in May last. It certainly seems as if any library that took this periodical in, and transcribed the entries in its bibliographical section on cards properly classed,

<sup>1</sup> *Bullettino di bibliografia e di storia delle scienze matematiche e fisiche.*  
Pubbl. da B. Boncompagni (Rome, 1868), &c.

would be able to keep up a pretty fair subject-index to scientific papers for the future. I must, in conclusion, say a few words on a subject-index to the transactions of literary societies. The prospect is here much more remote, from the want of the almost indispensable groundwork of a general alphabetical index. We have seen what an infinity of trouble in collecting, in cataloguing, and in transcribing will be saved by the Royal Society's list in the case of scientific papers, and are in a position to appreciate the impediments which must arise from the want of one in this instance. The work could be done by the British Museum if it had a proportionate addition to its staff, or by a continuance of the disinterested efforts which are now devoted to the continuance of Mr. Poole's index to periodicals. Failing these, the most practical suggestion appears to me Mr. Bailey's, that the undertaking might be to a considerable extent promoted by the respective societies themselves. If the secretaries of the more important of these bodies would cause the titles of the papers occurring in their transactions to be transcribed upon cards and deposited with this Association, we should accumulate a mass of material worth working upon, and which could be arranged while awaiting a favourable opportunity for publication. In some instances even more might be done. The library of the Royal Asiatic Society, for example, contains not merely its own transactions, but those of every important society devoted to Oriental studies, as well as all similar periodicals. Our friend, Mr. Vaux, could probably,



in process of time, not only procure transcripts of the papers contained in these collections, but could induce competent Orientalists to prepare a scheme of classification, and such a classified list, complete in itself and of no unwieldy magnitude, could be published as a sample and forerunner of the rest. The initiative in such proposals, as well as those referring to scientific papers, should be taken by our Association, which can negotiate with eminent men and learned bodies upon equal terms, and speak with effect where the voice of an individual would be lost. The desideratum of a classed index, in a word, affords our Society a great opportunity of distinguishing itself. It is this aspect of the matter, no less than the importance of the matter itself, that has encouraged me to bring it under your notice.

NOTE.—This paper, the first on the subject, so far as known to the author, attracted the attention of a gentleman of great ability, Mr. Collins of Edgbaston, known as the indexer and tabulator of Mr. Herbert Spencer's writings. He pressed the necessity of a classed index of scientific papers upon the attention of the Royal Society, which at one period seemed about to take the matter up; but the plan, so far as concerned Mr. Collins, was ultimately laid aside. Ere long, however, it was revived, and the task of classification is now being actively carried out, upon what precise system the writer is not aware, but doubtless upon one which has received mature consideration.

## PHOTOGRAPHY IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES<sup>1</sup>

THE subject of my paper has been already most advantageously introduced to you by the precious broadside of William de Machlinia, exhibited yesterday by Lord Charles Bruce; which, but for photography enlisted in the cause of scholarship, few of us would ever have beheld. It is equally commended by the pithy remark which fell from Mr. Bradshaw, "The best description of a book is the book itself." It is, nevertheless, my desire to bring under your notice the advantage of annexing a photographic department to national libraries or other similar institutions of first-class importance, as an integral portion of the institution. The significance of the proposal consists in the last clause. At the present moment any public library can have almost anything it wishes photographed by paying for it, and so can any private individual. But private individuals do not fill their houses with photographic reproductions of nature and art; and in comparison with the enormous results which might be obtained, public libraries, and, indeed, public institutions of any kind, have as yet hardly made more use of the potent agent which

<sup>1</sup> Read before the Library Association, Dublin, September 30, 1884.

science has put into their hands than the Coreans, of whom Mr. Bullen has told us, made of the invention of movable type.

Sure as I am of an indulgent audience, I shall perhaps yet more powerfully bespeak your attention if I tell you that the special cause which has determined me to bring this question forward at Dublin is a recent occurrence particularly interesting to Ireland—the transfer, by direction of the Government, of the Irish portion of the Ashburnham MSS. from the British Museum to the Royal Irish Academy. I am not here to protest against this decision. I accept it as an accomplished fact: and may sincerely profess that, so far as the interests of Celtic scholars in Ireland are promoted, I am glad of it. But on the same principle I must condole with the Celtic scholars in England, many of them Irishmen, who must, at least until the distant period when Mr. Gilbert's truly national undertaking is complete, repair to Dublin to consult what they might have seen in London. The point to be insisted upon is, that if the Museum had possessed a photographic department, the question whose interests were to be sacrificed could not have arisen at all. Though, as recently pointed out by Dr. Hessels, the photograph may not be absolutely unerring in the reproduction of minute facsimile, if made with due care it is practically adequate in the vast majority of instances. We have just heard the Dean of Armagh's testimony to the accuracy as well as the beauty of the facsimiles of ancient Irish MSS. made under the

direction of Mr. Gilbert. The photographic reproduction is sometimes even preferable to the original manuscript, bringing out and restoring faded letters. Given such a facsimile, and, save as a matter of sentiment, it would be almost indifferent whether the original reposed upon the shelves of London or of Dublin. With it, the scholar need rarely brace himself up for a long and expensive journey to one city or the other. With it, the national treasure is doubly, trebly, tenfold, or a hundredfold if you like, protected against theft, injury, or destruction. With it, Ireland might soon possess, at a nominal cost, facsimiles of all MSS. illustrating her ancient language or history, and not merely the Ashburnham. But if these propositions are true of the British Museum, they are true of every national institution. If they apply to Celtic scholars, they apply to all scholars. If they apply to the Ashburnham MSS., they apply to all MSS., including parish registers and public documents ; if to these, then to printed books of rarity and value ; and no less to every picture and statue, engraving and medal. Think of the boundless field thus opened up for the dissemination of instruction and enjoyment, for the insurance of irreplaceable wealth, and great must be the wonder that scarcely a corner of it should hitherto have been occupied.

The cause, nevertheless, is very simple. Photographic reproduction has not as yet been regarded as a duty incumbent upon a public library, and has not, accordingly, been provided for out of the

public funds. The same principle has not been applied to it which obtains in the case of binding, lighting, cleaning, attendance, and other things apart from the buying of books which are recognised as essential to the efficiency of such an institution. It follows that photography is so dear as to be rarely resorted to by private individuals; and that its exercise by public institutions is impeded not only by considerations of expense, but also by indispensable but vexatious formalities and restrictions. Photography, while in private hands, must be costly; first and foremost, because the photographer must live. Again, if he is an artist of the accuracy of manipulation required for the work of a public library, he must be enabled and entitled to put a high value on his services. Again, he has invested capital both in his education and his working apparatus, on which he must have interest. Once more, he works by the piece, and piece labour is always the highest paid. Yet once again, his remuneration comes to him entirely in money, and not in social position or distinction. Besides, the demand for the description of photographic reproduction which a public library would require is as yet but limited, and partly from these very difficulties of supply. In portraiture, for which everybody is a customer, and to a less degree in landscape and the reproduction of works of art, we see that competition has brought the desired article within reach of the masses. But in photographing books and MSS. the cost is still very disproportionate to the amount of labour or

the value of material. We move in a vicious circle, the difficulty of supply restricts demand, and the feebleness of demand obstructs supply. Nor, were the demand more extensive, would the public be effectually served by national institutions, so long as the system of private photography and piece-work endured : for the artist must have his profit, put it how you will : and it is this simple, and in the present state of things, legitimate condition, which cripples the library and museum on this side of their activity ; and, while enriching the individual, impoverishes the State in its spiritual aspect, by impeding the free circulation of intellectual wealth.

If the cause is as simple as I have stated, the remedy, fortunately, is no less so. In so far as photography for public objects is concerned, we must suppress the photographer as a tradesman. The State must enlist him, pay him a fixed salary, requiring his whole time in return, and minimise this source of expense by allowing him the rank of a civil servant, and a status on a par with that of any other head of a department. It must also provide the assistance which would be requisite, and the necessary apparatus and chemicals. The photographer's time being thus paid for, his profit abolished, and the material provided for him, what source of expense remains ? Absolutely none, until there is a tax upon sunshine.

It may still be fairly inquired :—

1. Whether such an undertaking is within the legitimate sphere of Government ?

2. Whether it is of sufficient public utility to justify Government action ?

3. How far such action would be remunerative financially ?

On the first point I shall say hardly anything. I can conceive no greater objection in principle to an official photographer than to an astronomer-royal, and I do not expect to hear any objections to the latter functionary in the city of Sir William Rowan Hamilton and Dr. Ball.

Nor do I apprehend that many among us will require to be convinced of the advantage of photography as an auxiliary to library work. It has already been sufficiently impressed upon us by our friend Mr. Henry Stevens. We meet here, however, in the hope that our voice on this and other subjects will penetrate beyond our own circle, and arrest the attention of many to whom these topics are at present unfamiliar. It is, further, by proving the utility of photography as an auxiliary to libraries and museums, and the extent to which these institutions are trammelled by the present impediments to its exercise, that I shall best encounter the more difficult question of the financial advantage of the proposal. For we shall all agree that the more generally useful anything may be, the more likely it is to be profitable.

I shall therefore point out very briefly the great benefit which the British Museum, the institution with which I am best acquainted, might derive from incorporating photography as an organised part of its system, instead of taking the

photographer up to lay him down again. I shall next adduce several instances within my own knowledge in which cheap photography would have been of material benefit to individual frequenters of the Museum ; sufficient, it seems to me, to justify the conclusion that a public need exists, to supply which might be profitable even in a pecuniary sense. Lastly, I shall look beyond the needs of any individual library, or any particular class of customers, and endeavour to point out ways in which a national photographic institution, preferably, I think, placed in connection with the British Museum, might subserve public objects of paramount importance.

I have said that, to be adopted to any purpose by a public institution, photography must become a portion of the organism of the institution itself. That is, the institution must be the photographer's employer, not his customer. If otherwise, all sorts of needful but troublesome official formalities must exist, which combine with the obstacle of expense to reduce photographic enterprise to a minimum. If a complicated piece of official machinery has to be set in motion every time a photograph is wanted, whether by a public department or a private individual, the want is not likely to be often acknowledged, much less when a moderate outlay will soon bring both to the end of their tether. Abolish the relations of tradesman and customer, pay the photographer once for all by an adequate salary, provide apparatus and chemicals with sufficient liberality, and you at once cut off whatever has



hitherto hindered and arrested the enlistment of the art in the service of culture. Instead of an artist working now and then as he may happen to get an order, which he seldom does except in absolutely urgent cases, you have one bound to devote the whole of his time to earning a moderate fixed salary, and, if he is the right sort of man, making it his pride and pleasure to do so. Instead of an institution doing comparatively little work, and supported by the reluctant contributions of comparatively few customers, you have one supported on a large scale at a cost individually imperceptible. Instead of heads of departments considering how little they can manage to spend, you will have them encouraged to tax their new auxiliary's resources to the utmost by the consideration that, the prime elements of expense being eliminated, it will, in fact, hardly be possible to spend anything. Here I may be met by an objection which deserves a reply. "Granting," it may be said, "the propriety of employing the photographer for strictly national purposes, why tax the entire community, however lightly, for the benefit of the small portion of it which may happen to want photographs? Is it right to take a farthing out of Brown's pocket to save Jones five guineas?" I scarcely expect that any among us will raise that objection, because, pursued to its logical consequences, it would abolish every museum and library supported out of rates or taxes. But, to anticipate it in the quarters where it may be urged, I shall prove that the benefits of cheap photography,

applied to artistic and literary purposes, extend far beyond the actual purchasers of photographs, inasmuch as the present restrictions act injuriously and indeed prohibitively upon undertakings of admitted general utility, both public and private.

In illustration of the impediments which the present system opposes to such undertakings, I may instance the difficulty of meeting the legitimate demands of provincial museums. Residents in the provinces, equally with residents in the metropolis, contribute to the support of institutions like the British Museum, and are entitled to expect that they should, as far as possible, participate in its advantages. There are, I believe, many well-meaning people so impressed with the justice of this demand that to give it satisfaction they are prepared to permanently dislocate the national collection, or to despatch portion after portion on an itinerating tour throughout the provinces. I need not seek to convince you that this specious suggestion is unsound; that the moral and historical and artistic significance of the collection depend upon its universality and the preservation of the delicate links and gradations of its several parts, and that the loss of the metropolis would by no means be the gain of the provinces. It is nevertheless the duty of the central institution to compensate the provinces in every possible way for their inevitable disadvantages, and though photography will not do everything in this respect, it will do much. In sculpture, coins, engravings, and drawings in outline or of neutral tint, the smallest town in the kingdom might

be almost on a par with the metropolis for every purpose of instruction or refinement. By enabling them to be so we should not be creating a luxury, but redressing a grievance. On this ground alone Government might fairly be asked to move in the matter. How much, too, might be effected by such artistic and archæological handbooks, photographically illustrated, as could be produced for a trifle if the process were no element in the expense! How much can be and is done even under existing difficulties is shown by the exquisite autotype illustrations of some of the catalogues of selected coins and medals recently published by the Numismatic Department of the British Museum. They prove how easily the entire collection might be made available for study and inspection all over the kingdom—ay, and in foreign countries and colonies—and confirm the proposition I have advanced, that the expenditure of public money in cheapening photographic reproduction is not merely a boon to the purchaser, but to the general public.

The circulation of photographs of works of art, though important to individual collectors, is rather the affair of public institutions. The similar circulation of books and MSS., the aspect of the question with which we as librarians are particularly concerned, is more directly interesting to private individuals, and on this account has attracted comparatively little notice. I am not sure, however, that it is not the more important of the two, nor that it may not, after all, be the branch most susceptible of profitable development. In the

matter of rare books, demand has now almost killed supply. The wish to possess them is more general than ever, but the means of gratifying it become from day to day more restricted by the tendency of such books to drift into public libraries, or into large private collections where they may be locked up indefinitely, and especially by the competition of America. At this juncture, photography, particularly in its form of photo-zinco-graphy, steps in, and offers the means of doing for the amateur of ancient and curious literature, for maps and MSS., precisely what the printing-press does for the great body of readers. All we need is that the obstacles which still render this process expensive, except when applied to objects in great demand, should be removed, that the scholar should be enabled to procure a cheap photographic reproduction as easily as the general reader can obtain a cheap book. Such scholars are numerous enough, I feel convinced, to defray the cost of material and of minor assistance, leaving in the worst case nothing for the State to pay but the insignificant salary of the chief photographic officer. Now let us take the case of another class of students, who deserve even more consideration, the collators of MSS. and rare books. Why should the scholar of the nineteenth century be in no better position than the scholar of the sixteenth? Why should he continue to be exposed to hardships which science has met? Think of the waste of human effort, the fret and friction of human temper entailed by the inability to procure accurate

facsimiles. Why should the scholar of an age of light get no good from the sun? Think of the long journeys, the long residences, the interminable correspondences of scholars, the mechanical labour if they are their own copyists, the expense and probable inaccuracy if they are not. Do we often see a critical edition of a classic without a lament that the editor has been unable to inspect some MS. at Madrid or Moscow? Did not the Biblical world wait thirty years for a facsimile of the Vatican MS., which a photographer would have produced in a small fraction of the time? And did it not prove an imperfect facsimile after all? Did not the learned Meibomius, albeit a ponderous Dutchman, ill adapted for equitation, ride all the way from Leyden to Bologna, allured by the unhappily misleading announcement, *Habemus Petronium integrum*? To come nearer to our own times, I may report (since I rather suspect it has been the germ of the whole subject in my mind) a conversation I have myself had with the Rev. Dr. Hayman, then editing the Odyssey, and most anxious to take our Museum MSS. of the poem home to his rectory in the north of Lancashire. I told him that the idea was contrary to the Museum statutes, to Act of Parliament, and to the eternal fitness of things. He said that he would give security to any amount. I said that money would not compensate the Museum or the world of letters for the loss of an unique MS., and that it would be shocking to place a scholar, possibly poor, under obligations which might

involve the loss of all he was worth. "Oh, as to that," he said, "as soon as I got the MS. home I should insure it for its full value." "Yes," I replied, "and deprive us of the only security we had for your vigilance." But I think we could have trusted Dr. Hayman with a photograph, or he could probably have bought one for the cost of his railway fare to and from London.

Let me now adduce some minor instances of the inconvenience created, at the Museum alone, by the absence of photographic facilities. The Congress of Orientalists has felt the want of Oriental MSS. deposited in England so keenly as to have unanimously concurred in a perfectly futile memorial to allow them to be sent to the Continent. The Austrian Government lately addressed an official request for the loan of an exceedingly rare book, which, if the Museum had possessed it, they could not have had, but of which, if an official photographic department had existed, they might have obtained the facsimile for a trifle. With due photographic facilities at Basle we might each of us have taken home a perfect facsimile of the memorable letter of Fichet which Mr. Bullen has brought to our notice, the accurate typographic reproduction of which will assuredly tax the resources of the printers of the "Library Chronicle." The Dean of Armagh could tell us how much he had recently to pay for the transcription of an entire book on Irish history at the Museum, though the charge was as low as possible. I have seen an accomplished lady, the wife of a Professor of Fine Art,

toiling day after day for weeks together, laboriously tracing plans of architectural structures for the illustration of her husband's lectures, which plans, under the conditions contemplated, she could have carried away in facsimile for a few shillings. I have known weeks employed and twenty pounds expended in copying a manuscript grammar of an African language; and a rare old English book transcribed, every word of it, to obtain a reprint. I have now a colleague in the Museum coming early and staying late out of his official time to transcribe an almost illegible Coptic manuscript, a photograph of which would have answered every purpose. Another colleague wished to give a facsimile page of a very curious MS. he had edited for a learned society; but was prevented by the cost; conversely, the same gentleman, thanks to photography, is at present deciphering a most obstinate MS. for the Corporation of Stratford-on-Avon, without having to go there or make himself responsible for the safe custody of the document. I know that the charges of the skilful men who restore missing passages of books in facsimile are, inevitably I suppose, so high that nobody who can help it will employ them. I have a mutilated book on my table at this moment which I earnestly wish could be entrusted to one of them, but I fear it will not do. Now, when we consider that it has been found practicable to facsimile the rare original edition of "Goody Two Shoes," with numerous woodcuts, by photo-zincography, and publish it at half-a-crown, it is clear that there

must be something wrong about this exorbitant cost which so effectually hinders the very work which photography, in our age, seems so especially called upon to perform, of counteracting the inevitable tendency of old books to scarcity and consequent dearness. Of the numerous official services which photography could render in a library, such as saving time in copying documents, or restoring damaged leaves of catalogues, I say nothing, for fear of occupying your time unduly; and of the innumerable uses to which it can be turned by an ingenious bibliographer I am also silent for the same reason, and because I regard this branch of the case as the especial property of Mr. Henry Stevens, who has proved it experimentally, and who has, I hope, more to tell us respecting it. I will merely remark that under all disadvantages, the last four volumes of the British Museum Catalogue of Greek Coins contain 116 autotype plates, with representations of nearly 2000 coins. What might not be done if the Museum were its own autotypist!

Instances so numerous, representative without doubt of a very large number which have not come to my knowledge, encourage the hope that the establishment of a photographic department at the Museum would be even financially successful. One very strong fact may be adduced, that proposals have been actually made to obtain a photographic copy of the great Chinese Cyclopædia, occupying eighteen hundred volumes. The proposition, needless if the Museum had possessed a photographic



establishment of its own, was that the parties should take the Cyclopædia away and photograph it themselves. It could not be granted, although the sum offered was no less than five hundred pounds, which would have about paid the proposed photographic officer's salary for a whole year. The fact is conclusive both of the need of photography as an auxiliary to library work, and of the encouragement which a well-managed endeavour would be sure to meet. Like the penny post and the telegraph, once fairly launched, it would raise the wind for itself. "Work," says George Eliot, "breeds:" and the great initial difficulty removed, unsuspected developments and applications are sure to be thought of. Much prudence and judgment would be requisite in working the scheme. Competition with professional photographers must be avoided; and the work of the institution confined to reproducing objects in its own collections, or those of other public institutions, or such in private hands as possessed a distinct literary, artistic, or scientific impress and value. The locality should be the British Museum, because, while we are able to receive articles from any other place on deposit, we are disabled from even temporarily parting with our own. If so, the management must, of course, rest with the Museum authorities, as we could not allow an *imperium in imperio*. It will be admitted that under the present Principal Librarian the Museum has fully earned the confidence of the public, and that this has been largely gained by the readiness shown to enlist mechanical processes

in aid of library work, particularly printing and electricity. The introduction of photography would be but a further development of the same principle; and although much consideration and discussion will evidently be necessary, I am not without hope that Mr. Bond, who has brought print into the catalogue and electricity into the Reading Room, may make the sun-crowned nymph, now an inmate who charges for her lodging instead of paying for it, a daughter of the house. Many questions will arise which only experience can solve. The work which the institution does for itself and that which it does for others must not be allowed to get into each other's way, and the adjustment of the scale of charges will require serious consideration. On the one hand, the very essence of the scheme is to reduce the cost of photography for literary or educational purposes to a minimum; and high prices would evidently be extortionate when the main elements of cost had been suppressed. On the other hand, the *bona fides* of customers must be guaranteed; and the Treasury will scarcely help unless the obligation to recoup it as far as possible is acknowledged and acted upon. The best principle, I apprehend, would be to proportion charges as nearly as possible to the expenditure of material—a variable quantity, depending upon the amount of work done—and to look upon the salaries of the photographic officer and his assistants as expenses to be covered as far as possible—but with which the State is not bound to concern itself more than with the salaries of other literary and

artistic servants from whom it does not expect pecuniary returns.

Ere I quit the subject, suffer me to advert to one aspect of it of national and even international concern. I allude to the service which photography can render in the preservation and dissemination of the national records. The Record Office, in London at least, is no doubt as nearly fireproof as a building can be made; its guardians must say whether it is so absolutely impregnable as to supersede all need for the precaution of making a duplicate copy of any of its treasures. But I know that it has unique documents relating to the most interesting events in Scotch history, facsimiles of which would be acceptable throughout Scotland. I imagine that these are but types of a large class of documents; and I am sure that the sight of papers relating to memorable transactions, or bearing the signatures of memorable men, would foster historical study and patriotic feeling throughout the length and breadth of the land. But there is another class of records, for whose safety and accessibility measures should undoubtedly be taken. I refer to the parish registers. This is no new idea; it has been frequently proposed that such documents should be removed to London and collected in a great central repository. To this, as regards the originals, I cannot assent, both from respect for the rights of property and from the fear lest some unlucky day the registers of the entire kingdom might disappear in one common catastrophe. Photography would solve the problem. With

regard to the international aspect of the question, it may be fairly expected that if we lead, other nations will follow, and that we shall have to follow if we let them lead. Suppose that France and we have taken the step in concert, we shall be in a position to mutually exchange copies of all the important documents illustrative of the history of either nation contained in the archives of both. Suppose Italy and Spain to join, and we may have the chief materials of English history at home, and shall no longer be obliged to despatch agents to calendar Venetian state papers, or unriddle the ciphered scrolls of Simancas. The conception is so fruitful, its application is so manifold and momentous, that I half recoil, like Fear, afraid of the picture myself have painted. Yet I believe there is nothing in it that upon sober examination will not be found to follow naturally from the simple propositions with which I began, that the photographic reproduction of national property should be the concern of the nation ; and that to a great museum or library photography should be, not a tool, but a limb.

## THE TELEGRAPH IN THE LIBRARY

LIBRARY administration, like all other departments of human activity in this age, must experience the results of the unexampled development of science in its application to the affairs of life. The most immediately obvious of these are the mechanical: so simple a device as the sliding-press, as will be shown in its place, has saved the nation thousands of pounds. The most promising field for such achievements has hitherto been the United States of America, where the application of scientific contrivances to ordinary purposes is more general than in Europe, and where the more important libraries are new structures, where improvements can form part of the original plan, with no fear of impediment from arrangements already existing. Next to mechanics, photography and electricity may be named as the scientific agencies chiefly adapted for the promotion of library service. Photography has been sufficiently treated in another essay in this volume. The services of electricity will be most cordially acknowledged by those who best remember the paralysis of literary work, alike official and private, engendered by a fog at the British Museum, and in particular recall the

appearance of the Reading Room, a Byzantine "tower of darkness," with a lantern dimly burning in the centre, the windows presenting the appearance of slate, and dubious figures gliding or stumbling through the gloom—attendants brought in from the library to take care that the handful of discontented readers did not profit by the opportunity to steal the books. All this nuisance has been abolished by the electric light, which not only renders the Reading Room available for the public on dark days, but allows the ordinary work of the Museum to be carried on in all departments; the same may be said of all other libraries. The beautiful, potent, and above all safe electric ray is an advantage to all, and in dark days a passage from death unto life for those libraries where, as in the Museum, gas has been proscribed on account of its danger and its injurious effects upon books.

The services of electricity to libraries, however, are by no means exhausted by the electric light. It is capable of rendering aid even more important, and the more so in proportion to the extent of the library. The need for rapid communication throughout large buildings has been in some measure met by the telephone, whose usefulness is impaired by its incapacity for transmitting and recording written messages. Recourse must be had to the telegraph—not, of course, that ordinary description of the instrument where the record is made in dots and dashes, intelligible solely to the expert—but the printing telegraph, where the

message appears in clear type, or a facsimile of the transmitter's handwriting. The use of such telegraphs for various purposes, especially those of the Stock Exchange, is now very familiar, and there is perhaps no place where it could be introduced with more signal advantage than the Reading Room of the British Museum.

There is no great reason at present for complaint of delay in bringing books from the Museum library to the Reading Room ; but the system is not, as so many other points of Museum administration are, one to challenge the administration and emulation of other libraries. It is impossible to observe its working without pronouncing it cumbrous and below the present level of civilised ingenuity. The reader writes his ticket at the catalogue desk, generally with a pen trying to his temper, and the captive of his bow and spear. He then walks some distance to deposit it in a basket on the counter, where it remains until a boy is at hand to carry it to the corridor outside the Reading Room, where it is put into a clip and drawn up to the gallery. All these operations are indispensable so long as recourse is solely had to human muscle, but they evidently involve great loss of time. The object to be aimed at should be *the delivery of the ticket at the table of the attendants who procure the book in the library simultaneously with its being written in the Reading Room* ; and this seeming impossibility can be achieved by the employment of a writing telegraph by which, as fast as the message is written at one end of the wire, it is recorded in

facsimile at the other. The present writer has experimented with the American Telautograph, and, so far as the experiments went, nothing could be more satisfactory. No knowledge of telegraphy whatever is required from the operator : he simply inscribes his message with a style on a piece of tissue-paper, and it reappears simultaneously at the other end of the wire. Nothing seems necessary but to furnish the catalogue desks with electrical transmitters (which occupy no great space) instead of inkstands, and to provide for the carrying of the wires out of the room. When the writer endeavoured to introduce electrical communication in 1894, he feared that this requisite would present difficulties, but was assured by experts that it really offered none. The ticket written by the reader might be retained by him as a memorandum : if it could be repeated in *duplicate* at the other end, one copy might be treated as now ; the other, with any necessary correction, might be pasted at once into the register, saving all the time now occupied in registration.

It is of course perfectly possible that hitches and breakings down might at first occur from time to time, from the delicacy of the machine employed, or from other causes. The machines have not been properly tested, nor can they be, except by a continuous course of experiment. But whence this morbid fear of experiment ? After Darwin's definition, the apprehension should surely be on the other side. A single machine, kept at work for a week, would be sufficient to test the principle.



The first experiments with the electric light at the Museum were anything but promising, but Sir Edward Bond persevered, and the result is what we see.

And how brilliant a result the establishment of telegraphic communication would be ! The saving of time is no doubt the most practical consideration, but apart from this, how vast the improvement in the economy of the Reading Room ! No more troops of boy attendants, with the inevitable noise and bustle ; nothing but the invisible messenger speeding on his silent errand, and the quiet delivery of books at the desks : an unparalleled scene of perfect physical repose in the midst of intense mental activity. Of course the improvement would not stop with the Reading Room, and ere long all departments would be connected by the writing telegraph.

This paper, of course, is not written with any view of recommending the Telautograph. Instruments better adapted for the purpose may exist, although the writer has not met with them. He originally proposed the employment of a printing telegraph as a means of abridging delays in the Reading Room as long ago as 1876. The great improvements in administration introduced at that time, however, rendered the need less urgent ; nor, perhaps, was electrical science itself then sufficiently developed. Acquaintance with the Telautograph led him to take the subject up again in 1893 and 1894, and he still hopes to find the electric force a match for *vis inertiae*.

## ON THE PROTECTION OF LIBRARIES FROM FIRE

OF all the library's enemies, the most terrible is fire. Water is bad enough; is it not recorded that the 450 copies of the Bible Society's translation of the Gospel of St. Matthew into Manchu, printed on the soft silken paper of China, were destroyed by an inundation of the Neva? But such damage can rarely occur, unless when the element of the Sylph is invoked to combat the element of the Salamander. The muddy waters of the Neva, also, were probably more pernicious than the "salt sea streams" would have been. We ourselves have transcribed manuscripts of Shelley's which had been for months at the bottom of the Mediterranean, and which, although protected by package, had evidently been soaked with salt water. Exposure to fire for a hundred-thousandth part of the period would not have left a letter legible.

The librarian's vigilance and resource, accordingly, ought to be enlisted against fire in an especial manner, and no contrivance should be overlooked that seems to afford the least prospect of controlling or mitigating its ravages.

On July 17, 1884, experiments were made in the garden of Mr. Bernard Quaritch, the eminent bookseller, with fire-proof cases devised by Mr. Zaehnsdorf, equally distinguished as a binder, and were reported in the *Academy* of July 26. Three books, each enclosed in a separate case, were put into a fire, and kept there for half-an-hour. On their being extracted, "one, which had been in a case lined with tin, unpierced with air-holes, suffered only in its binding, which had been slightly damaged, not directly by the fire, but only by the heated metal. A second, of which the case was of the usual kind, but also unpierced with air-holes, came out intact. The third, in a case resembling that of the second, but pierced with air-holes of good diameter, suffered most, the fire, and the water by which the fire was extinguished, having both found admission through those punctures, the water being the more deleterious agent of the two. This book was, however, not materially injured. From this experiment it may be concluded that a good case will in almost all instances preserve a book from destruction by fire, that a metal lining to the case is not necessary, and that the air-holes (which experiments of a different kind have proved to be indispensable) should be small and numerous, distributed over the top and front edges, and not only on the top."

In 1894, the chief part of the library of Lord Carysfort at Elton Hall, Peterborough, was destroyed by fire, these books only escaping which had been protected by Mr. Zaehnsdorf's cases. On

October 3, 1896, Lord Carysfort wrote: "A few of my books which were in cases were quite preserved from serious injury, the cases having been blackened and destroyed, while the book and its binding were scarcely discoloured. Since the fire I have had all my valuable books put into cases such as you make."

These circumstances having accidentally become known to the writer, he thought it his duty to test Mr. Zaehnsdorf's cases for himself. Two of these, filled with printed papers of no value, were placed (April 1897) on a very hot fire in the writer's own study, in the presence of Mr. Zaehnsdorf and several officers of the library of the British Museum. The result was highly satisfactory. Though the cases were greatly damaged, the papers received very little injury, and this only when they were in actual contact with the bottom and sides of the cases. Had they been bound volumes, nothing would have suffered except the edges of the binding.

It seems evident that Mr. Zaehnsdorf's invention well deserves the attention of wealthy collectors of precious books. There is a serious obstacle to its introduction on an extensive scale into great libraries from the expense of the cases, which at present average about a pound a piece. It is probable, however, that cases could be contrived to take books by the shelf-ful instead of single volumes. In any event, however, it would be well worth while to employ them for the protection of books of extreme rarity and inestimable manuscripts, as well as the archives of great libraries, and artistic

and scientific departments in general, which, when calendared, as they must one day be if they have not been burned first, will be among the most valuable of materials for the history of culture.

It is no doubt true that the best protection against fire is not any mechanical device, but the contiguity of a good fire brigade. But at Elton Hall the nearest brigade was many miles off, and, be it as near as it will, it is also true that such devices are not exposed to the negligences, misunderstandings, and other infirmities incident to mortals which may in an evil hour paralyse the operations of human agents; and that the most efficient brigade will be greatly helped by anything which, by retarding the progress of a conflagration, holds it back from gaining the mastery before the opposing forces have been fully brought into play. This important object might also be promoted by the employment of wood specially seasoned by a chemical process. Experiments made on behalf of the British Museum in the spring of 1898 have been highly satisfactory, evincing that although wood so treated will char, it will not, properly speaking, burn, and that the use of it for floors and shelving would materially impede the process of combustion.

## THE SLIDING-PRESS AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM<sup>1</sup>

THE object of this paper is to give a short account of the sliding-press or hanging book-press now in use at the British Museum, and to suggest the importance of its introduction elsewhere where possible, and of regard being had to it in forming the plans of libraries hereafter to be built. Every successful library is destined to be confronted sooner or later with the problem how to enlarge its insufficient space. Without considerable financial resources such enlargement has hitherto been absolutely impracticable, and even where practicable has rarely been carried into effect without a long period of makeshift, discomfort, and disorganisation, for which the enlargement itself affords only a temporary remedy. The great advantages of the sliding-press in this point of view are two : it allows expansion within the edifice itself, without the necessity of additional building, and it enables this expansion to be effected gradually out of the regular income of the library without the need of appealing for the large sums which would be

<sup>1</sup> Read at the Annual Meeting of the Library Association, held at Nottingham, September 1891.

required by extensive structural additions to the existing edifice.

I may assume that all present have seen, or will see, the photographs of the Museum sliding-press exhibited to the Conference, with the accompanying description. I may therefore be very brief in my account of it here, and simply characterise it as an additional bookcase hung in the air from beams or rods projecting in front of the bookcase which it is desired to enlarge, provided with handles for moving it backwards and forwards, working by rollers running on metal ribs projecting laterally from the above-mentioned beams or rods, and so suspended from these ribs as absolutely not to touch the ground anywhere. These are its essential characteristics, without which it would be indeed an additional book-press, but not a hanging-press or sliding-press. In recommending this system of additional accommodation, I by no means wish to insist upon this special form as the only one adapted for the necessities of a library. I have no doubt that in very many libraries the arrangement of the projecting beams or rods would be inapplicable, and that it would be better to resort to the original form of the idea, from which the Museum derived its own application of it—the idea, namely, of a skeleton door made in shelves, hinged upon the press requiring expansion, running on a wheel resting upon a metal quadrant let into the floor, and opening and shutting like any ordinary door. I have merely to affirm that for the Museum the adaptation we

have made is a very great improvement ; but this is due to the peculiar construction of the rooms to which the new press has hitherto been chiefly confined. Rooms of this pattern do not generally exist in public libraries, and where they are not found I am inclined to think that the plan which I have just described, the prototype of the Museum sliding-press, may be found the more advantageous. I also think, however, that for reasons quite unconnected with the sliding-press, this pattern of room ought to be imitated in libraries hereafter to be built, and when this is the case, it must inevitably bring the Museum press after it. It will therefore be worth while to describe this style of building, in order that the mutual adaptation of it and of the sliding-press may be clear. It consists of three storeys lighted entirely from the top. It is therefore necessary for the transmission of light from top to bottom that the floors of the two upper storeys should be open ; and they are in fact iron gratings. It follows that the floor of the highest storey must form the ceiling of the second, and the floor of the second the ceiling of the third. Here is the key to the sliding-press system. The beams or rods which I have described as projecting from the presses that line the wall already existed in the shape of the bars of the grating, and did not require to be introduced. Nothing was needful but to provide them with flanking ribs projecting at right angles, from which, as you see in the photographs, the additional press could be suspended by rollers, admitting of easy working backwards and forwards, and then the



sliding-press was fully developed out of the skeleton door. No thought of it had ever crossed the minds of the original designers of the building ; yet they could have made no better arrangement had this been planned with an especial view to its introduction. They had even made the storeys of exactly the right height, eight feet. I have not hitherto mentioned that the press takes books both before and behind, because this feature is not essential, and must indeed be departed from when the press is applied to the accommodation of newspapers and such like large folios. For ordinary books it is manifestly a great advantage, but carries with it the obligation that the presses shall not be higher than eight feet, or, when full on both sides, they will be too heavy to work with comfort, unless, which I do not think impracticable, machinery for the purpose should be introduced.

The principle of a sliding or hanging-press is, so far as I know, entirely peculiar to the British Museum, and hardly could have originated elsewhere than in a building possessing, like the Museum, floors and ceilings entirely grated. The main point, however, the provision of supplementary presses to increase the capacity of the library without requiring additional space, had previously been worked out in at least two libraries. The earliest example, apart from casual and accidental applications at Trinity College, Dublin, and, as I have been told, the Bodleian, was, I believe, at Bradford Free Library, and the gentleman entitled to the credit of its introduction there was

Mr. Virgo, the librarian. Mr. Virgo's contrivance was, I understand, a double door, not hinged on to the original press in one piece, as in the pattern I have just described, but opening in two divisions to right and left, as frequently the case in cupboards. I speak, however, with some uncertainty, for when, writing on the subject in Mr. Dewey's *Library Notes*, and most anxious to give Mr. Virgo all due credit, I applied to him for particulars of his invention, modesty, as I must suppose, rendered him silent, or at best but insufficiently articulate. I hope he may be present to-day, and that the Conference may hear the particulars from himself. It is due, however, to the Bethnal Green Library, the other institution to which I have referred as having given effect to the principle of press expansion *in situ*, to state most explicitly that the idea of its application at the Museum was derived wholly and solely from Bethnal Green; that the Bradford example, though it had been set for some years previously, was never heard of at the Museum until the model had been constructed and the first presses ordered; and that I am satisfied that Bethnal Green knew as little of Bradford as the Museum did. The Bethnal Green inventor was, I am informed, the late Dr. Tyler, the founder and principal benefactor of the institution, and, as elsewhere, the device was resorted to by him under the pressure of a temporary emergency—in this case the accumulation of specifications of patents annually presented by the Patent Office. The introduction of the principle at the Museum

dates from a November evening of 1886, when, going down to attend a little festivity on occasion of the reopening of the Bethnal Green Library after renovation, I was shown the supplementary presses by the librarian, Mr. Hilcken. I immediately saw the value of the idea, and next morning sent for Mr. Jenner, assistant in the Printed Book Department, in whose special fitness I felt great confidence, from his admirable performance of the duty of placing the books daily added to the Museum, which frequently requires much ingenuity and contrivance. I told Mr. Jenner what I had seen, and desired him to consider whether he could devise a method of adapting the Bethnal Green system to the exigencies of the British Museum. He did consider: he went down to Bethnal Green and saw the presses employed there, and, to his infinite credit, hit upon the plan of suspending the presses from the grated floors of the upper storey in the manner shown by the photograph, which, as I have already pointed out, is entirely original. A model was constructed by the aid of Mr. Sparrow, the ingenious locksmith of the Museum. Mr. Bond, then principal librarian, took the matter up warmly, the first batch of presses was ordered early in 1887, and from that time forward we have had no difficulty at the Museum in providing space for ordinary books, although some structural alterations will be requisite before the sliding-press can be applied to the whole of the New Library, and it must be modified if it is to be made serviceable for newspapers. A new

room in the White Wing, not admitting of a grated ceiling, has been specially adapted with a view to the introduction of the press, and may be usefully studied by librarians about to build, although I think that some modifications will be found expedient. I have pleasure in adding that on my report of June 1, 1888, in which I went into the whole matter very fully, the trustees obtained from the Treasury a gratuity of £100 for Mr. Jenner and of £20 for Mr. Sparrow, in recognition of their services.

I have designedly said recognition, not recompense, for no grant likely to be awarded by the Treasury would bear any proportion to the saving effected on behalf of the nation. To make this clear I will adduce some particulars stated in my report to the trustees. Eight hundred sliding-presses can be added to the New Library at the Museum without any modification of the building as it stands, and 300 more by certain structural alterations. The cost of a press being about £13, this gives £14,300 for the 1100 presses, or, with a liberal allowance for the cost of the alterations, say £15,000 altogether. Each press will contain on the average about 400 volumes, showing a total of 440,000 volumes, or about seven times the number of books in the great King's Library added to the capacity of the New Library, without taking in another square inch of ground. Excluding newspapers, periodicals, Oriental books—otherwise provided for—and tracts bound in bundles, and assuming an annual addition of 20,000 volumes of other descriptions, this provides for twenty-two

years. But much more may be said, for, whether in the form of swinging door or sliding-press, the principle of expansion *in situ* can undoubtedly be carried out through the greater part of the Old Library, as well as in the basement of the New.<sup>1</sup> What additional space this would afford, I have not endeavoured to estimate. Another immense advantage connected with the system is the facility it offers of gradual expansion. Any other enlargement requires new building ; new building requires a large sum to be raised by a great effort of rating, borrowing, or subscribing ; and too frequently the adjoining ground is preoccupied, and must be acquired at a great additional expense. Fifty thousand pounds would, I believe, be a very moderate estimate for such accommodation, if obtained by building, as the Museum gets from the sliding-press for £15,000, supposing even that the ground were free to build upon. In our case, however, this ground must have been purchased. We may well imagine the Trojan siege we should have had to lay to the Treasury, to obtain the money ; the delays of building when this was eventually forthcoming ; and the fearful inconvenience which would have existed meanwhile. Now we simply put down a sum in the annual estimates for as many sliding-presses as are likely to be required during the ensuing financial year, introduce them wherever they seem to be necessary, and hope to

<sup>1</sup> Since this was written, the engineers of the Board of Works have reported that the sliding-press system can be safely extended to the galleries, which more than doubles the estimate of increased space given on the preceding page.

go on thus for an indefinite number of years. Any new apartment, complete in itself, must involve waste, for some parts of it must necessarily fill up faster than others; but in the sliding-press is a beautiful elasticity; it can be introduced wherever it is seen to be wanted, and nowhere else. Finally, and for the Museum this is most important, the additional space gained is in the close vicinity of the Reading Room. A new building must have been at a distance, involving either great inconvenience in the supply of books to readers, or an additional Reading Room, catalogue, reference library, and staff.

I think enough has been said to convince librarians of the expediency of taking the sliding-press, or some analogous contrivance, into account, in plans for the enlargement of old libraries, or the construction of new ones. Some libraries will not require it, either because they are on too small a scale; or because, like branch libraries in great towns, they admit of being kept within limits; or because, like Archbishop Marsh's Library at Dublin, they are restricted to special collections. But all experience shows that it is impossible to provide for the wants of a great and growing library on too generous a scale, or to exhibit too much forethought in preparing for distant, it may be, but ultimately inevitable contingencies. York Cathedral Library might have seemed safe, but see the burden which Mr. Hailstone's recent benefaction has laid upon it. To the librarian it may be said of Space what the poet said of Love:—

“Whoe'er thou art, thy master see,  
He was, or is, or is to be.”

I should add that the cost of a sliding-press, or of a door-press, might probably be much less to a provincial library than to the Museum, where the shelves are constructed in the most elaborate manner for special security against fire.

In fact, I believe that the sliding-press is only one corner of a great question, and that in planning large libraries it will be necessary to take mechanical contrivances into account to a much greater extent than hitherto. I am especially led to this conclusion by some particulars which have reached me respecting the new Congressional Library at Washington. I am unable to state these with the requisite accuracy, but I hope that some American friend may be present who can supply the deficiency.

I have to add that the photographs of the sliding-press here exhibited by me were taken by Mr. Charles Praetorius, and that copies can be obtained from him. He may be addressed at the Museum. I hope that they fulfil their purpose; they cannot, however, of course, represent the press so well as the model of it constructed by Mr. Sparrow for the exhibition of library appliances at Antwerp, where it was shown last year. This is now exhibited to the public in the King's Library, and Mr. Sparrow could probably produce copies of it if desired. An account of the press was contributed by Mr. Jenner to the *Library Chronicle*, and by me to Mr. Melville Dewey's *Library Notes*, both in 1887.

## ON THE PROVISION OF ADDITIONAL SPACE IN LIBRARIES<sup>1</sup>

THE interesting paper<sup>2</sup> to which you have just listened may well serve as introductory to a somewhat fuller treatment on my part of the question of providing adequate space for future accessions of books, so immensely important for all libraries, but especially so for public libraries, and for these in the ratio of their probable extent and consequent usefulness. When I had an opportunity of describing the British Museum sliding-press to the Nottingham conference, I dwelt upon the utility of the invention in this point of view as much as upon the mechanism of the press itself; and as the point is one which cannot be too much insisted upon, I shall take this opportunity of returning to it. Before doing so, however, or mentioning any further contrivances for economising space that may have suggested themselves, I may be allowed to tender my personal acknowledgments to Mr. Mayhew for the ingenuity which he has evinced, and to say that I am very desirous that his invention

<sup>1</sup> Read at the Annual Meeting of the Library Association, Belfast, September 1894.

<sup>2</sup> A paper by Mr. H. M. Mayhew, of the British Museum, on "A Revolving Extension Press."



should be brought into practical operation at the Museum as soon as possible. We ought, I think, to exemplify every useful device both in press construction and other departments of library work that we may have the good fortune to introduce, both for our own credit and for the advantage of other libraries which may be disposed to inquire into our methods. I hardly expect that the pivot-press will replace the sliding-press to any great extent at the Museum, because, as I have previously stated, although the designers of the larger portion of our library had not the most remote conception of the sliding-press, they could not have provided for it more effectively if they had foreseen and contemplated its introduction. But, when the need for procuring additional space by mechanical contrivance makes itself felt, as must inevitably be the case one day in all really important libraries, difficulties will be found in the introduction of the sliding-press which will not exist in the case of the pivot-press. Unless expressly so designed, libraries will seldom be provided, as the Museum was, with a grated ceiling from which the sliding-press can be suspended without more ado, and the construction of such a ceiling is a formidable and expensive piece of work. This difficulty may indeed be overcome by making the sliding-press run upon the ground, as at Bethnal Green and the basement of the Museum, but this throws the entire weight upon the floor, which, though unobjectionable on a basement, may be dangerous in upper storeys. I am inclined to believe, therefore, that the pivot-press

may be used with excellent effect in many instances, especially from its simplicity and ease of construction, when a sudden need arises for the accommodation of a new accession of books. I may further draw attention to a special merit—its singular lightness even when full of volumes. A child can work it with ease, unlike the sliding-press, which, when quite full, may tax the strength of a powerful man.

Respecting the history of this press I have only to say that, so far as I am aware, it originated with Mr. Mayhew at the British Museum; I should, nevertheless, be in no way surprised to learn that it, or something resembling it, had already been in use in other libraries. If so, this is not known at the Museum. It did not, like the sliding-press, come to us as an importation to be developed, but originated, so far as I know, entirely with Mr. Mayhew. If he took a hint from any quarter, it may have been from those revolving book-stands which some of us, no doubt, use in our own studies, so admirable for their compactness and the readiness with which the desired book is brought to hand, but unfortunately so dear. I do not know why they should always be constructed in wood, and have often thought that if Birmingham manufacturers would turn them out on a large scale in metal, they would meet with a remunerative demand.

I now come to the general question of providing space in libraries for indefinite future accessions. This does not seem to me to have as yet received attention in any degree proportionate to its

importance. Perhaps I am the more impressed with it from its having been my duty for a long series of years to place the new acquisitions of books received at the British Museum. The want of space for particular descriptions of books was thus daily forced upon my attention, as well as the alarming prospect of a total failure of space at no very distant day, unless this could be averted by some mechanical contrivance, the possibility of which dawned upon nobody until that accidental visit of mine to the Bethnal Green Library, which I have related to you upon a former occasion. The problem, you must remember, was not merely to find space for books, but to find it near the Reading Room. The Trustees might conceivably have acquired then, as they have most happily acquired last summer, extensive space for building in the neighbourhood, and this might be invaluable for the deposit of particular classes of literature, such as newspapers and official publications. But this would not have helped us with the mass of literature continually required for the Reading Room, for it is absolutely necessary that this should be close at hand. Supposing that room could have been provided in a new building for the classes of publications I have mentioned, the difficulty would have recurred as soon as the space thus gained had been filled up ; and ultimately we should have had to choose between allowing the library to fall into a condition of chaos, and removing the Antiquities Department elsewhere, thus devoting noble rooms to purposes for which they were not constructed,

and for which they are in no respect adapted. Things were, indeed, fast approaching this point when the introduction of the sliding-press, like a breeze springing up for the rescue of a drifting vessel, carried us safely past the rock upon which we seemed destined to strike.

The answer to the question whether libraries in general will not, without special precautions, find themselves in the position which the British Museum has so fortunately escaped, depends upon the reply to another question, which we must all answer in the affirmative, or we should not be here: "Is the system of free public libraries going to be a success?" If so, it is evident that the present development of free libraries very imperfectly represents that which they are destined to attain within a century. They cannot be kept at the level of public requirements without being continually supplied with the best and newest literature. It will be useless to expect the community to interest itself for a library full of obsolete treatises or statistics which have ceased to be accurate, or histories not brought down to date, or fiction reflecting the taste of the last generation. Periodicals and newspapers will have continued to prolong themselves automatically; municipal and other local records will have multiplied; and, if the library has really done its work, and compelled recognition as an essential constituent of civilisation, the funds provided for its augmentation will no longer be upon their present restricted footing, and it will have been largely enriched by donations.

Evidently, therefore, the question of space will have become very pressing, and the librarians of the future will have good reason to reproach the short-sightedness of their predecessors if the problem has been left entirely to them. One rough-and-ready method of providing space might indeed be suggested—to sell the old books, and buy new ones with the proceeds; but to say nothing of the invariably unsuccessful financial results of such operations, and the discouragement to students and to donors, I need not point out that a library administered on such principles would be no better than a book club. I am not aware how far any of our free libraries may already be suffering embarrassment in the matter of space, but I can mention a circumstance which may appear significant. We used to hear a great deal about the stores of duplicate books accumulated at the British Museum, and the advantage which would ensue from their distribution among provincial libraries. Well, a few years ago we acted upon the suggestion, and did distribute all that could be spared. When only a few volumes could be given all went smoothly; but when long sets, especially of parliamentary papers, were offered, with a promise of their being kept up, if possible, we met with an unexpected coyness; some libraries declined, others made difficulties; and one, which is entitled to receive continuations regularly, has now postponed taking its due for more than a year. I know not how to account for this, except on the hypothesis of deficient space.

The question whether I am right in laying so much stress on the timely provision of space in libraries depends, as I have intimated, upon the more serious question, whether the library movement is to prove a success. If it is not, we need not trouble ourselves. If the present free libraries—at least those in populous towns and centres of intellect and industry—are not to be the nuclei of much more important institutions than they are at present; if they are not to become the pride of their respective districts, and to be supported by them upon a much more liberal scale than is now the case; if they are not to expect liberal accessions from the generosity of private donors; if they are not to be affiliated with whatever agencies exist around them for the promotion of culture; if, shedding from time to time what they may deem their obsolete books, they are to renounce all claim to an historical character, and only provide for those needs for which the circulating library exists already; then, indeed, the question of space need not concern us. But if the reverse of all this is to be the case; if they are to become noble libraries, store-houses of local and municipal as well as merely utilitarian literature; if all descriptions of English literature are to be at least fairly represented; if private collectors are to be made to see that the local library would afford a worthy repository for their books; then the question of space cannot be too attentively considered, or, in the height of success, the library may break down. You know the value of land in large towns, and

the costliness of extending any premises that may be situated in a good quarter, and surrounded by shops, or warehouses, or public buildings. The possibilities of future extension should never be lost sight of when a site for a library is selected. But, as the most desirable site cannot always be had, it is still more important so to plan the library from the first that it may be susceptible of inner development, without trenching upon the adjoining land ; and where, in the case of existing libraries, this precaution has been neglected, to lose no time in adapting the library for interior extension, if possible. At the Museum we have at present two methods—the sliding-press, whether suspended or resting on the ground, and the pivot-press. Both these have been described to you. But they by no means exhaust the possibilities of economising space, and I wish to draw your attention to other ingenious methods, which, however, I am not about to describe, for I take this to be the proper business of the inventor. That they must be worth attention you will all agree, when I tell you they are devised by Mr. Virgo. Mr. Virgo, as his name seems to imply, is a gentleman of singular modesty. I do not think that, but for me, he would ever have received the credit due to him for his share in the invention of the sliding-press ; nor do I think that he has done nearly enough to bring his ingenious ideas forward for the general good. I hope he will do so, either at this meeting, or ere long in the pages of *THE LIBRARY*, or some other suitable medium. I shall not attempt to trespass upon his

ground, but will very briefly make a suggestion for book accommodation in a restricted space, which his ingenious contrivances may have prompted, although to find its exact prototype we must go back to the earliest libraries that have ever existed.

These, as we all know, were the libraries of the kings of Babylon and Assyria. Paper and parchment not having been then invented, literature could only be inscribed on some hard substance. Wood or metal might have been used, but the substances employed by the Assyrians seem to have been almost exclusively stone, clay, or terra cotta. An incised stone slab may be an excellent vehicle for a brief record intended to remain fixed in the same place, but for a chronicle or a liturgy, or a set of astronomical observations, or any other of the staple productions of Babylonian or Assyrian literature it is objectionable in two respects—it is profuse of space, and it is not easily portable. The King of Assyria, like the King of Persia of a later date, had doubtless frequent occasion to send for the chronicles of his kingdom to refresh his memory respecting the treason of some Bigthan or Teresh, or the services of some Mordecai. The Assyrian historians or librarians, therefore, devised the inscription of their literature upon cylinders, usually hexagonal prisms, giving six faces instead of one, and possessing the double advantage of easy portability, and of bringing the largest amount of writing possible into the smallest possible space. The question of portability does not concern us



now (though I may remark incidentally that in very extensive libraries it offers a decisive argument against the card catalogue), but it does appear to me worthy of consideration whether, in endeavouring to make room for our books, we might not occasionally employ the hexagonal form of press, fixed or revolving, and thus revert with advantage to the method which our most primitive predecessors adopted to make room for their writings. The hexagonal prism has the advantage of affording more space practically available within less area than any other geometrical figure. It seems well adapted for use in the central area of large rooms as a supplement to the wall space; for the extension of wall space when presses are run out from the sides towards the centre of the room; and for the storage of valuable books or other objects which it is desirable to keep apart. A case of this description could be partially glazed to allow of the exhibition of a portion of the contents level with the eye; and many other applications might probably be found for the hexagonal book-press or cabinet in libraries constructed with an especial view to its introduction. It may be that such presses or cabinets, admitting as they would of being made of any degree of strength, or of being lined or protected in any manner, and of being wholly or partially glazed or unglazed as desired, would be best of all adapted for the custody of objects of art or archæology—"infinite riches in a little room." Yet, even if so, libraries and museums are so frequently under the same

management that the subject cannot be deemed inappropriate for a congress of librarians.

I will finally mention another method of obtaining increased space for the display of books, MSS., and other exhibited objects. The lower part of ordinary bookcases can be converted into show-cases by placing against them, attached or unattached, light tables with glazed tops, resting on wheels to allow of easy withdrawal when access to the case is required. This would greatly increase the exhibition space in libraries and museums, and might sometimes allow the centre of a fine room to be free from obstruction, and available for lectures and meetings. Applied to ordinary wall cases, it might admit of the display of many objects supposed to be exhibited, but which in reality are not so, being placed too high or too low to be seen.

## PREFACE TO BLADES' "ENEMIES OF BOOKS"<sup>1</sup>

THE precept "Love your Enemies" was never intended for the enemies of books, because the enemy of books is not an individual foe, but *hostis humani generis*. The value of books, as of other things, may be superstitiously overrated. We are accustomed to speak of them as if they were in themselves the wisdom, or the knowledge, or the genius, of which they are, in fact, only the receptacles. They are not the honey of the human hive, but only the treasure-cells in which it is stored, and the analogue of the bee is the author. But even in this restricted point of view, their function is so important that to destroy them is a crime of *lèse-humanité*; and it is not known that any one ever enunciated their destruction as a sound principle, unless it were the Caliph Omar. Even he, if the famous *bon-mot* attributed to him is genuine, was willing to spare one book; and could his life have been prolonged for a century or two, he would have discovered that in reprieving the Koran he had authorised the creation of a very considerable literature. The number of

<sup>1</sup> Edition of 1896.

commentaries upon the Koran actually existing is not small; what would it have been had it been necessary to prove that all history, and geography, and astronomy, and everything else that man needed to know, was implicitly taught therein?

No such gigantic figure as the destroyer of the Alexandrian Library, brandishing, like the spectre of Fawdon, a blazing rafter, whose light streams down the centuries, occupies a post of honour in Mr. Blades' volume. In comparison, he may almost be likened to that poet who adjured, "Now, Muse, let's sing of rats," having previously struck out mice as below the dignity of the subject. The foes he enumerates are Fire, Water, Gas and Heat, Dust and Neglect, Ignorance, Book-worms, Other Vermin, Bookbinders, and Collectors. To these another might be added—Sinister Interests, which cannot be classified under the head of Ignorance, for they know well that the existence of books is incompatible with their own. It would be a curious subject of inquiry whether these interests, whose potency in mutilating valuable books and hindering their dissemination, sometimes until it has become too late for the world to profit by them, is unfortunately quite unquestionable, have ever succeeded in actually destroying any work of real importance to mankind. The number that have on this account never been written at all is no doubt enormous, but from the nature of the case cannot be ascertained, and the loss from this cause must be in every sense of the word inestimable. It would, however, probably be found that the book which

once got written also managed to get printed, though sometimes with such secrecy that it might almost as well have remained in manuscript. Far more mischievous was the effect of pressure upon the books which did appear under the authority of a licenser, either emasculated by him or by the author. Whether the censors ever succeeded in suppressing a worthy book or not, it is pretty certain that they never succeeded in suppressing a pernicious one.

Such speculations would have been alien to the pacific and debonair spirit of Mr. Blades—a man devoid of gall, and ill-equipped for thornier paths of controversy than the definition of a folio or the date of a Caxton. In these he was formidable, not merely from his natural ability, but from his practical acquaintance with the mysteries of printing, an accomplishment rarely possessed by bibliographers. He was able to deal, and willing to receive, hard blows; but his gentle spirit doubtless rejoiced to find in the "Enemies of Books," as he conceived and treated the theme, a subject on which all the world thought as he did. No one, even in this age of rehabilitations, is likely to constitute himself the apologist of mice and book-worms. If a criticism were ventured on Mr. Blades' method, it might be whether, with the exception of these zoological enmities, the various forms of hostility of which he treats should not be grouped under a single head—that of Ignorance. Ignorance misleads the peccant bookbinder, so sternly rebuked by Mr. Blades; ignorance (when

it is not hard necessity) exposes books to the decomposing effects of gas ; ignorance overlooks the need for ventilation ; ignorance appraises a book by its exterior, and sacrifices, it may be the "o'er-dusted gold" of a Caxton, or it may be a work of true genius in a cheap and ordinary edition. Mr. Blades, on the one hand, has rescued Pynsons on their way to the butter-shop ; and we, on our part, have redeemed Emily Brontë's last verses—almost the noblest poem ever written by a woman in the English language—from a volume half torn up, because, forsooth, it had little to boast in the way of external appearance. There is another kind of ignorance, which perhaps operates towards the preservation of books—that fond conceit which leads a man to ascribe incredible rarity to a book of which none of his neighbours have heard, or vast antiquity to one no older than his grandfather. Numbers of books, especially in the United States, have owed their preservation to such amiable delusions ; but unfortunately their preservation is in most cases a very small benefit.

Whether or no Mr. Blades' treatise might have been more comprehensive and philosophical, it is undoubtedly very practical, and all its precepts deserve respectful attention, especially those which have any reference to heat or ventilation. Book-worms in this favoured country are now nearly as extinct as wolves (we have seen some imported from Candia) ; and against book thieves there is no remedy but lock and key. The spiritual enemies of literature in this age accomplish their

purpose less by the destruction of good books than by the multiplication of bad ones, and the present is hardly a suitable occasion to deal with them. To part, as Mr. Blades would have desired, so far as may be in charity with all men, we will conclude with the observation that this much may be said even for the enemies of books—that they have unintentionally highly encouraged the race of bibliophiles, whether bookhunters or booksellers. If books had always received the care and attention which they ought to receive, the occupation of this interesting class would be as gone as Othello's. The Gutenberg Bible would exist in two hundred and fifty copies, more or less. The Caxtons would be numerous, perfect, and in excellent condition. To find a unique, one would have to resort to such curiosities as a single impression on vellum, or a special copy prepared for presentation upon some extraordinary occasion.

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## SIR ANTHONY PANIZZI, K.C.B.<sup>1</sup>

ITALY has been fertile in eminent librarians. Magliabecchi was probably the most learned librarian that ever lived; Audiffredi was the creator of scientific cataloguing; to Battezzati the practical librarians of the United States confess themselves indebted for some of their apparently most original ideas. But it is Sir Anthony Panizzi's especial distinction to have added to much of the erudition of a Magliabecchi and all the bibliographical skill of an Audiffredi the more commanding qualities of a ruler of men. He governed his library as his friend Cavour governed his country, and in a spirit and with objects nearly similar, perfecting its internal organisation with one hand, while he extended its frontiers with the other.

Born on September 16, 1797, at Brescello, in the province of Reggio, in the duchy of Modena, at that time a part of the Cisalpine Republic, Antonio Panizzi came into the world as the citizen of at least a nominally free state, but grew up the subject, first of a foreign intruder, and afterwards of the worst of the petty despots of Italy. These circumstances indirectly determined his future

<sup>1</sup> *Athenæum*, April 19, 1879.



career. As a man of thought and feeling he could but be a patriot ; as a man of action he could but be a conspirator. After receiving his education at the Lyceum of Reggio and the University of Parma, which he quitted with honourable attestations of his proficiency, he prepared to practise as an advocate, but speedily became implicated in the political commotions of the time. It was the day of the Holy Alliance, when the Spanish Revolution had called the Italian into life :—

“Spain calls her now, as with its thrilling thunder  
Vesuvius wakens *Ætna*, and the cold  
Snow-crags by its reply are cloven in sunder.”

While Shelley was writing, Panizzi was acting. In 1821 he was denounced to the Modenese Government, saved himself by flight, narrowly escaped arrest by the Austrians at Cremona, and, after a short residence in Switzerland, whence he was expelled at the instance of Austria and Sardinia, arrived in England in the May of 1823. The Modenese authorities proceeded to try him in his absence, and having duly sentenced him to be executed in effigy (October 1823), sent him a bill for the legal expenses thus incurred. Panizzi, with equal humour, replied negatively in a letter subscribed “*L’anima di Panizzi*,” and dated “*Campi Elisei, regno diabolico*,” rather a shock to received ideas of geography.

The Elysian Fields were apparently at that time situated in Liverpool, whither Panizzi had repaired, provided with introductions from Ugo Foscolo to

Dr. Shepherd and to William Roscoe, the men who, with James Martineau, have given Liverpool a place in the history of letters. Liberality of opinion united him to both these eminent persons, and his Italian origin and Italian enthusiasm necessarily proved the most potent recommendations to the historian of Lorenzo de' Medici and Leo X. From Roscoe, indeed, he received all the affection of a parent, but these were the days of the Liverpool scholar's adversity. Panizzi, nevertheless, probably owed to him the introduction to Lord Brougham which proved the turning-point in his career. He is said to have been of great assistance to Brougham in the Wakefield trial. In 1828, furnished with further introductions from Roscoe to Samuel Rogers and Sir Henry Ellis, he quitted Liverpool to assume, at Brougham's invitation, the post of Professor of Italian in University College, London. He had supported himself while in Liverpool as a teacher of Italian; little record remains of the struggle, but it must have been severe. The present writer has heard him say, while lamenting the miserable salaries paid to supernumerary assistants in the Museum thirty years ago, that he had notwithstanding maintained himself upon much less. One indispensable acquisition he made at Liverpool, a ready command of our language, entirely unacquainted with it as he was upon his arrival in this country. Neither his accent nor his idiom was ever free from traces of his foreign extraction, but when he wrote the latter circumstance was rather favourable to him.

The peculiarity of manner contributed to the general impression of originality, and the massiveness of his thoughts was agreeably relieved by the raciness of his style.

The study of Italian, an indispensable branch of polite accomplishment in Elizabeth's time, was becoming a speciality or a tradition in George IV.'s. The professorship existed rather for the College's sake than the students'. Panizzi produced an Italian Grammar and Reading Book, and gave oral instruction to the few who required it. His attention, however, was mainly engrossed by a much more important undertaking, which would have given him reputation, had he achieved nothing else. Nearly three centuries had elapsed without an edition of Boiardo's "Orlando Innamorato," of which the "Orlando Furioso" is but a continuation, and without which the latter poem is not fully intelligible. Some occasional rusticity of diction, so pedantic is Italian purism, had sufficed to obscure the merits of a poem which Signor Villari, writing in an age more familiar with generous ideas, celebrates for "its moral seriousness, its singular elevation, its world full of variety, of imagination, of affection,"—qualities, indeed, which had militated against it in the day of Italy's degeneracy, and had caused preference to be universally accorded to the brilliant but half-jocular *rifacimento* by Berni. Sir Anthony Panizzi was the man to be attracted by such qualities; he must, moreover, have felt an especial interest in Boiardo as a native of the

same district of Reggio from which he himself sprang. He determined to rescue him from oblivion, and effectually accomplished his purpose by editing him along with Ariosto (1830-1834). The first volume of this fine edition, dedicated to his benefactor Roscoe, is occupied by his celebrated dissertation on Italian romantic poetry, especially remarkable for the reference of mediæval romances to Celtic sources, and containing analyses of the "Teseide," the "Morgante," the "Amadigi," and others of the less read Italian romantic epics. It is further graced by translations contributed by Lady Dacre, Mr. Rose, and Mr. Sotheby. The second volume is prefaced by a memoir of Boiardo, with an essay making him full amends for the long usurpation of his fame by his adapter Berni. The corrupt text of the "Orlando Innamorato" is restored with great acumen from a collation of rare editions principally contributed by the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville, and, as well as that of the "Furioso," is accompanied by valuable notes. At a later period Sir Anthony edited Boiardo's minor poems.

The distinguished assistance which Panizzi had been able to command for his edition evinces the hold which he had already acquired upon the best English society. His urbanity and charm of manner, no less than his accomplishments, made him irresistible. He was intimate at Holland House, and on terms of personal friendship with most of the Liberal statesmen who mainly directed English policy for the next thirty years. His friends

now came into power, and Lord Brougham used his influence as an *ex officio* Trustee of the British Museum to secure his appointment as an extra assistant librarian of the Printed Book Department (April 27, 1831). When one considers what Panizzi found the Museum and what he left it, one is in danger of being betrayed into injustice to the institution and its administrators at that period. Miserably inadequate as it must appear if tried by our present standard, there was no conscious deficiency on the part of its official representatives, and it fully corresponded to the ideal of the public. The nation, in fact, had scarcely the remotest idea of the organisation of literary and artistic collections as a branch of the public service. The records were in a shameful state of dilapidation; the Museum itself existed only by accident; the National Gallery did not as yet exist at all. Men like Hallam could honestly confess their perfect content with the Museum as it was, and, unquestionably, it numbered among its officers persons of the highest eminence. To mention only Sir Anthony's immediate official superiors, the Keeper of the Printed Books was a most accomplished scholar, the Assistant-Keeper had made the standard translation of Dante. If there was an uneasy spot anywhere it was the catalogue. The old printed catalogue had become inadequate. Mr. Hartwell Horne had for some time been engaged on the compilation of a classed catalogue, which did not seem to promise good results. Mr. Baber, the Keeper, saw that a good alphabetical catalogue

was the indispensable condition of a classed catalogue, and Panizzi loyally supported him. The Trustees appeared to be irresolute. While this question was in agitation the grievances of an assistant, very properly dismissed from the MS. Department, brought about a Parliamentary inquiry into the general management of the Museum. In July 1836, Panizzi appeared before the Committee, and courageously, yet with perfect good taste and official decorum, laid bare the enormous deficiencies of the national library. A still more valuable contribution was the mass of evidence supplied by him with reference to the condition and administration of foreign libraries, the result of journeys to the Continent undertaken with the express object of collecting it, and occupying many hundred folio pages in the Appendix to the Committee's Report. Most valuable of all, perhaps, was his clear enunciation of the principle that the Museum ought not to be a mere show-place, as the Government and the country then practically concurred in regarding it, but a great educational agency. This principle, emphatically expressed by him before the Committee, gives the keynote of all his administrative action.

Merits like these could not go unrecompensed, even though they might have rather alienated than conciliated some of those whose duty it was to reward them. In July 1835, a proposal to raise Panizzi's salary had been shelved in a manner which so excited Mr. Grenville's indignation that he never attended another meeting of the Trustees.

In 1837 Mr. Baber's resignation of the Keepership of the Printed Books placed Panizzi in a delicate position. Mr. Cary, the translator of Dante, his immediate superior in office, had every claim to promotion on the grounds of seniority and literary distinction, but Mr. Cary had recently recovered from an attack of insanity. In reply to incessant insinuations, Mr. Panizzi's high-minded conduct in the matter was reluctantly stated by himself before the Royal Commission of 1849, and the account is fully confirmed by a narrator who had himself had sharp conflicts with him, Mr. Edwards, in his "Founders of the British Museum." Mr. Cary, it ultimately appeared, thought that his past services entitled him to "that alleviation of labour which is gained by promotion to a superior place"(!). It must be remembered that there were no superannuation allowances in those days.

Panizzi did not expect or intend his labours to be alleviated by promotion. He took office at a most critical time, when the books were being transferred from Montague House to their new quarters, when the question of the catalogue was ripe for decision, and when the public were beginning to suspect the deficiencies of the library. The removal was promptly effected, and some of the assistants temporarily engaged to aid in it remained, and proved most valuable officers of the Museum. The undertaking of the catalogue led to much tedious discussion, but in December 1838, Panizzi declared his readiness to accept this formidable addition to his ordinary duties, and

early in 1839 the cataloguing rules, which have ever since been regarded as models, were framed by him with the assistance of Messrs. Winter Jones, Watts, Parry, and Edwards. Mr. Jones assumed the general direction of the catalogue; Mr. Watts undertook the arrangement of the new acquisitions on the shelves; the cataloguing of these was chiefly intrusted to the Rev. Richard Garnett, Mr. Cary's successor as Assistant-Keeper. A misunderstanding, for which Panizzi was in no respect responsible, interfered with the progress of the general catalogue. It was announced that it must be proceeded with in alphabetical order, and much time was lost before Panizzi was permitted to resort to the more expeditious plan of cataloguing the books shelf by shelf. The Trustees were further represented as demanding that it should all be in type by a fixed date, and much time and labour were accordingly wasted in printing the first volume, containing letter A, which, as books requiring to be entered under headings commencing with this initial constantly occurred during the subsequent progress of the catalogue, inevitably proved exceedingly defective. The catalogue has nevertheless been now for a long time substantially completed in MS., and for the most part incorporated with the much more extensive supplementary catalogue of books acquired during its progress; the question whether and how it should be printed is too extensive to be entered upon here. Even more of Panizzi's attention was claimed by his third task, the ascertainment of the



deficiencies of the library. Rich in classics, in the bibliographic treasures collected by such amateurs as Mr. Cracherode, in history and some other subjects to which especial attention had been paid by the King's Librarian, in its unique collections of English and French revolutionary tracts, in the departments of natural science represented by the Banksian Library, the Museum was still deplorably poor in most branches of general literature, in German almost ludicrously so. Aided by Mr. Jones and Mr. Watts, Panizzi commenced an active investigation into the condition of the library in this respect. The results were embodied in his celebrated report of 1845, subsequently published as a Parliamentary paper, which, backed by his political and social influence, caused an increase to £10,000 of the annual grant for the purchase of books. Another important step in the same direction was the enforcement of the Copyright Act, hitherto but negligently attended to by the Secretary to the Museum. Upon this duty being intrusted to Panizzi, he discharged it with a vigour that soon brought reluctant publishers to their senses, and he even personally undertook an expedition through Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, for the sake of enforcing the observance of the Act. Yet another accession due to him was the matchless Grenville Library, perhaps the finest collection of books ever formed by a private individual. Mr. Grenville himself declared that the nation was solely indebted to Mr. Panizzi's influence with him for this magnificent gift; and

Panizzi's minute instructions for its removal, addressed to Mr. Rye, afterwards Keeper of the Printed Books, are still extant to evince his anxious care for the collection, his perfect knowledge of it, and his grasp of every administrative detail, from the greatest to the smallest. With such accessions from so many sources, it is hardly surprising that the volumes originally under Mr. Panizzi's charge should have multiplied fivefold by the time he quitted the Museum. It would be endless to describe his numerous improvements in such matters of library detail as stamping, binding, and supplying the Reading Room. The most important of any was the introduction of movable and multifold slips into the catalogue, largely due to a suggestion from Mr. Wilson Croker.

The Royal Commission of 1847-49 deserves to be considered the turning-point of Sir A. Panizzi's administration. Up to this time, however caressed in highly cultivated circles, he had been unpopular with the public, who could not be expected to know how his plans were cramped and thwarted, and were in many instances illiberally prejudiced against him as a foreigner. The Commission gave him a welcome opportunity of at once challenging inquiry into complaints, and of making known the signal improvements already effected by him. His invitation to complainants to come forward—widely circulated through the notice taken of it by this journal—elicited a number of attacks, which, with the replies, may be found in the Parliamentary Blue Book, and form as instructive and amusing a

body of reading as ever Blue Book contained. The Commissioners, who included men of letters like Lord Ellesmere, and men of business like Lord Canning and the present Duke of Somerset, could but report that not one charge had been established in any single particular. It is abundantly clear that very few of the complainants had any definite notion of what they wanted, and the frivolousness of their imputations, even had they been well founded, arouses something like indignation when contrasted with the immense services which Panizzi was at the time rendering without receiving any credit at all. This triumphant vindication of his management, however, made him omnipotent with the Trustees and the Government, and paved the way for the greatest undertaking of his life. It is needless to describe a structure so familiar to all English men of letters as the new Reading Room. The original design, sketched by Mr. Panizzi on April 18, 1852, was submitted to the Trustees on May 5 following. By May 1854, its originator's indomitable perseverance and extensive influence had prevailed to obtain the large grant necessary for the commencement of the work, which was completed and opened to the public in May 1857. The part generally visible—Mr. Smirke's contribution to the plan—though architecturally the most imposing, is hardly the most remarkable portion of a structure providing space for three hundred readers and a million volumes on ground previously wasted and useless. Every detail was either devised or superintended by Sir

A. Panizzi, and it is not too much to affirm that no edifice has existed more perfectly reconciling grandeur of general effect with an accurate adaptation of means to ends in the very smallest things. One thing alone is wanting, that the reference library should be as far above competition as the Reading Room, and this, too, will be accomplished when the exigencies of space allow the present Principal Librarian's plans to be carried out. The attempts that have been made to deprive Sir A. Panizzi of the credit of the conception are futile. Any one could see that the space in the quadrangle was wasted. The present writer himself made the remark to an officer of the Museum at the age of fourteen. But it was one thing to discern the evil and another to provide the remedy.

In 1856 Sir A. Panizzi succeeded Sir Henry Ellis as Principal Librarian, being himself succeeded as Keeper of the Printed Books by Mr. Winter Jones. His administration of the Museum as a whole was carried on in the same spirit as his administration of the library, but, except for the great impetus given to purchases generally, was not distinguished by equally striking incidents. His work for the library had been mostly performed, and the affairs of the other departments afforded less scope for the display of his peculiar qualities. Two or three slight administrative mistakes may be admitted without derogation to his fame, for they can be shown to have originated in every instance from an excessive regard for what he himself considered the true interests of his subordinates. This was ever

a passion with him, and every improvement in the position of the officials of the Museum effected during his connection with the establishment may be traced to his influence. Exhausted at length with work, he retired on his full salary in July 1866. He took up his residence in Bloomsbury Square, almost within call of the Museum, and ceased not to the last to exhibit the warmest interest in the institution. In 1869 he accepted the honour of knighthood, which he had frequently declined. His death on April 8 has already been recorded in our pages.

Little can be said here of Sir A. Panizzi's activity as a politician and patriot. It was probably little less important or beneficial than his activity as a librarian, and possibly occupied hardly less of his time and thoughts. It was, however, wholly below the surface, and the materials for defining and appreciating it are at present wanting. There can be no question that he served the cause of Italy most effectually by his intimacy with the leading English statesmen, who admired and confided in him. Thoroughly Anglicised, he knew how to appreciate the currents of English sentiment, and predicted to Lord Palmerston that the Conspiracy Bill would occasion the downfall of his government. With this statesman, as well as Lord Russell, he was most intimate; and he received touching proofs in his last illness of the regard of Mr. Gladstone, whose famous pamphlet on the Neapolitan prisons sounded a note originally struck by Panizzi. Sir James Hudson, the English Envoy

at Turin, was one of his most trusted friends, and their mutual understanding was of great service to the Italian cause. Cavour thoroughly confided in him, and vainly tempted him to a political career in Italy by the offer of a senatorship. Though devoted to the house of Savoy, he cordially sympathised with Garibaldi, in whose English reception he had a great share, and whom he accompanied on that occasion to the tomb of Ugo Foscolo. He reckoned the Orleans princes among his friends, and a community of literary tastes especially linked him to the Duke d'Aumale. While his sympathies and connections were thus Liberal, his relations with statesmen on the other side were always most amicable. We believe that the flattering resolutions of the Trustees passed on occasion of his resignation were moved by Mr. Walpole and seconded by Lord Beaconsfield.

Besides the works we have mentioned, Sir Anthony Panizzi was the author of an essay in Italian entitled "Chi era Francesco da Bologna?" in which that artist, the inventor of italic type, is identified with the great painter Francesco Francia; and the editor of Lord Vernon's sumptuous verbatim reprint of the first four editions of the Divine Comedy, respectively printed at Foligno, Jesi, Mantua, and Naples. He further wrote some pamphlets on questions connected with the British Museum and the Catalogue of the Royal Society's Library, and contributed several articles on political and literary subjects to the *Edinburgh, Quarterly*, and *North British Reviews*.

Sir Anthony Panizzi's was a rich and complex nature, and his character cannot be sketched in a phrase ; else we might feel tempted to sum it up in two characteristics, magnanimity and warmth of heart. Other traits, however, must be added to complete the portrait—prodigious power of will, indomitable perseverance, hatred of inefficiency and pretence, active and disinterested kindness, impetuosity held in check by circumspect sagacity. He might be said to combine the characteristics of the land of his birth and the land of his adoption : his moral nature seemed English, his intellect Italian. Warmth of feeling gave after all the keynote to his existence. He was, indeed, jealous of his well-won fame, but fame was not his main object. If he greatly helped his Museum, his country, his colleagues, it was because he began by greatly caring for them. In labouring for the public he erected an imperishable monument for himself :—

*“ Ipsa quidem virtus sibimet pulcherrima merces ;  
Dulce tamen venit ad manes, cum gloria vitæ  
Durat apud superos nec edunt oblivia laudem.”*

## THE LATE JOHN WINTER JONES, V.P.S.A.,

PRINCIPAL LIBRARIAN OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM, AND  
FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.<sup>1</sup>

THE conference of the Library Association at London, in 1881, was painfully signalised by the funeral in the same city of its first President, who had presided over its inauguration at the preliminary London conference four years previously, and to whose countenance it had been indebted for much of the success which attended its establishment. A short notice of Mr. Winter Jones's distinguished career as a librarian seems to be demanded by his services to the Association and his peculiar relation to it as its first President, no less than by the position which, in his capacity of Principal Librarian of the British Museum, he so long occupied at the head of the profession of librarianship in this country.

John Winter Jones was born at Lambeth, June 16, 1805, and belonged to a family long established in Carmarthenshire, and already honourably connected with literature. His father, John Jones, Esq.,

<sup>1</sup> Contributed to the *Transactions of the Library Association*, 1882.



author of "Hawthorn Cottage" and other tales, for many years edited the *Naval Chronicle* and *European Magazine*. His grandfather, Mr. Giles Jones, had been secretary to the York Buildings Water-Works, and according to the unanimous tradition of the family was author of several of the admirable little books published for children about the middle of last century by Newbery & Co., including the renowned "Goody Two Shoes." No more conclusive proof of the merit of "Goody Two Shoes" could be given than the able argument by which Mr. Charles Welsh has recently sought to attribute the authorship to Goldsmith. While agreeing with Mr. Welsh that the book is not unworthy of Goldsmith in humour, philanthropy, and simple truth to nature, we are unable to discover any such similarity of style as to warrant its being ascribed to him. On the other hand, the peculiar vein of dry humour characteristic of "Goody Two Shoes" reappeared in Mr. Winter Jones's conversation in so remarkable a degree as to justify the impression that he had preserved a family trait. Assuredly, had he ever essayed his powers in the field of imaginative literature, "Goody Two Shoes" is the kind of work which one would have expected him to have produced. A great-uncle, Mr. Griffith Jones, had been the friend of Johnson and Goldsmith; an uncle, Mr. Stephen Jones, was also known in literature, especially as the author of "Masonic Miscellanies," and editor and continuer of Baker's "Biographia Dramatica." Mr. Winter Jones's

mother, Mary Walker, was cousin to the academician Smirke; nor, in the list of remarkable persons connected with him, should his nurse be forgotten, Anne Parker, widow of the unfortunate Parker who was executed as ringleader of the mutiny at the Nore.

Mr. Jones received his education at St. Paul's School. He does not appear to have been eminent as a classical scholar, but some youthful letters show how early he had acquired the power of writing excellent English. He was, moreover, unusually precocious as an author, although his first attempt was by no means ambitious. In 1822 appeared an anonymous little book, now exceedingly rare, "Riddles, Charades, and Conundrums: with a Preface on the Antiquity of Riddles," containing a considerable number of original enigmas—a truly quaint and exceptional performance for a youth of seventeen. Mr. Jones's juvenile ambition, however, was stimulated to this undertaking by an accomplished lady, Mrs. Davies, mother of Sir Lancelot Shadwell, who thought highly of his talents, and had a considerable share in it.

The profession designed for Mr. Jones was that of a Chancery barrister. After leaving school he became the pupil of Mr. Bythewood, of Lincoln's Inn, the most eminent conveyancer of his day, who had a very high opinion of him.<sup>1</sup> He must, however, have devoted much of his time to studies not

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bythewood bequeathed to Mr. Jones his gold repeater watch, valued at one hundred guineas; and Mr. Jones received in after years a precisely similar legacy from Sir Anthony Panizzi.

of a legal nature, for about this time he became an excellent scholar in the modern languages, not taught, or taught imperfectly, in St. Paul's School. His proficiency is proved by a little volume undertaken for his own amusement, but published at the suggestion of his sister: "A Translation of all the Greek, Latin, Italian, and French Quotations in Blackstone's Commentaries, and in the notes of the editions by Christian, Archbold, and Williams. By J. Winter Jones, 1823." He also made the index to the new edition of Wynne's "Eunomus, or Dialogues concerning the Law and Constitution of England."

Just as Mr. Jones was looking forward to being called to the Chancery Bar his prospects were clouded, and his course in life altogether changed, by a most serious illness, greatly aggravated by the improper treatment of a physician who entirely mistook the nature of the complaint. The result was a temporary loss of voice, accompanied by a weakness of the chest which for several years rendered any speaking in public impossible. Between ill-health and the want of introductions and connections in any but the legal profession, Mr. Jones seems to have been unable for some years to follow any definite calling. He pursued his studies as far as possible, learned Spanish from the refugees who at that time abounded in Islington and Somers Town, and even acquired some knowledge of Russian, destined to be very useful in future years. To this time also belonged his acquaintance with Jerdan and Godwin. He knew

the latter intimately, and was impressed by his intellectual eminence, but used to describe him as a man selfish in minor things, who must, like Harold Skimpole, always have his plate of fruit, no matter the price or the season. Of the second Mrs. Godwin he had a higher opinion than seems to have been usually entertained by her acquaintance. A narrow escape of his life which he had at this time may be best narrated in his own words, so characteristic of the man's coolness and aversion to fuss or display, even when the occasion might seem to excuse them :—

“SOUTHAMPTON, *September 9, 1833.*

“MY DEAR FATHER,—I am extremely sorry that I cannot profit by your directions for swimming. On Friday week I went to bathe at the new baths, being my second attempt in cold water. No one was in the bath at the time, nor was there any rope, but as I thought the place was perfectly safe, I plunged in backwards according to the directions I had received. I sank, of course, and throwing up my chest rose immediately, but when in the water I lay on my back motionless from cramp in my stomach. By no effort that I could make could I force down my feet or turn, and my struggles caused my head to dip so frequently that had assistance been delayed a minute longer I must have been suffocated. I fortunately recollected having read that persons are sure to float if they throw back the head as far as possible, thereby elevating the chest, and remain quite quiet. This

saved me. I mentioned the circumstance to Dr. Shadwell, and he strongly recommended me to abstain from the water at present, as it evidently did not agree with me."

About two years from the date of this letter, Mr. Jones obtained his first important public employment as a secretary to that then itinerant body, the Charity Commissioners. The charitable institutions of England, long corrupted and misused, were receiving a much-needed overhauling, one of the indirect fruits of the Reform agitation. Perambulating bodies of commissioners were traversing the length and breadth of the land, "wanting to know, you know," and eliciting an amount of information which could not have been obtained without the direct personal pressure of inquisitors upon the spot. Their labours produced much excellent fruit, and restored a vast amount of charitable endowment to its legitimate uses. The records survive in ponderous Blue-Books; and the student of general literature may derive an idea of the nature of their investigations, which it is to be hoped he will not take too literally, from the lively ridicule of "Crotchet Castle." When the satirist declared that the labours of the Commissioners did no good to any living soul, he certainly ought to have excepted Mr. Winter Jones, who accepted his appointment—as he told the present writer—mainly in the hope of re-establishing his shattered health by a course of travel and living in the open air. This object he fully attained. The few letters he wrote to his

family on his tour that have been preserved are full of racy humour, and suggest what a page of English life might have been presented by a record of the more private experiences of the Commission, too familiar to be registered in Blue-Books. As nothing of the sort exists, it may not be improper to preserve two specimens here, notwithstanding their want of connection with bibliography :—

“ MARKET HARBOROUGH, *Nov.* 20, 1836. ”

“ Harborough is a monstrously stupid place, possessing no interest that I have yet discovered either in the form of situation or antiquities. The inhabitants of the county are principally graziers and fox-hunters, men of substance, coarse in their manners, and tolerably hospitable. Of the few clergymen I have yet seen, little can be said in praise. One has been suspended for his profligate habits ; another drinks so hard that he is incapable of performing the duties of his church, being frequently insane ; and a third attended yesterday at our board with his church-warden, both of whom were so fuddled that they could with difficulty make themselves understood. . . . We have a vast deal of business to transact, and every prospect of our work increasing. The labour is not so much occasioned by the extent or intricacy of the charities, as by the provoking stolidity of those who ought to be fully informed upon the subject. There exists in this part of the county a very extraordinary charity founded by a clergyman named Hanbury, who prepared seventeen deeds for the foundation of various branches

of one grand charity. The property settled is directed to accumulate until the proceeds amount to £10,000 per annum (they are at present about £500), when a cathedral is to be erected at a cost of £150,000, and professorships of music, poetry, philosophy, botany, &c. &c., established. One of his deeds he heads, 'Beef for ever,' another, 'Organs for ever,' a third, 'Schools for ever,' with much of the same oddity. He has published a thick octavo volume with an account of his charity and a copy of his foundation deeds. The latter occupy 248 pages of the work, so if I have to abstract the whole of them it is impossible to say when my labours will end."

"LEICESTER, *Feb.* 5, 1837.

"Our third and last visit was to a Mr. Hildebrand, a clergyman, and head-master of the Kibworth free grammar school. This poor fellow has just had his wife, mother-in-law, eight children, and two servants confined to their beds with influenza, and I never beheld an assemblage of more ghastly objects than we formed at the dinner-table. With the exception of one, we had all pale cheeks, red eyes, and every other sort of *phizzical* ugliness, the excepted one had a blue complexion approaching to black. Mr. Hildebrand, however, assured me the next morning at breakfast that the hearty dinner he had made, and drinking as much wine as pleased him (he was, by-the-bye, a long time in being pleased) had completely removed his disorder. I may make the same remark respecting myself. The necessity I

have been under of drinking wine every day has almost totally removed my complaint. I have nothing now to complain of but a considerable degree of nervous debility, which I hope will depart in a few days."

The conclusion of the rural peregrinations of the Commission at the beginning of 1837 threatened Mr. Jones with loss of employment, although he was still engaged in town in reducing its voluminous proceedings to print, and the extant correspondence shows that his work was very important. He says in a letter of this period :—

"I am ready to be knocked down to the highest bidder in any honourable service, and have no objection to write speeches and pamphlets and frame bills for laws and schemes for mines provided I am properly remunerated, but there's the rub." The real occupation of his life, however, was unexpectedly at hand. Within two months after writing as above he was appointed (April 1837) to the situation of permanent assistant in the Printed Book Department of the British Museum. The suggestion that he should apply for this post seems to have come from his friend Mr. Nicholas Carlisle, an assistant-officer who had come to the Museum from Windsor, along with the King's Library, and who is perhaps best remembered by a work on the endowed grammar schools of England, valuable in its time. The application was, moreover, strongly supported by Mr. Johnstone, a member of the Charity Commission,



who had been greatly impressed by Mr. Jones's efficiency in his secretaryship, and who enlisted his father, Sir Alexander Johnstone's, influence with the Archbishop of Canterbury, in whose hands all appointments to the Museum then practically rested. At the end of 1837, upon the resignation of the Assistant-Keeper, Mr. Cary, Mr. Jones became a candidate for the office. Short as his connection with the Museum had then been, he still had the claim of seniority. But he had gained the esteem and confidence of Mr. Panizzi, the Keeper, and Mr. Panizzi was obnoxious to persons influential with the Archbishop, who accordingly replied that "his connection with the establishment is of recent date," and apprehended "that due consideration for the claims of others will put it out of my power to serve him upon the present occasion." Who these others were did not appear, and it seemed still more difficult to identify them when, after some delay, the appointment was conferred upon a gentleman, undoubtedly possessed of the highest talents and the greatest attainments, but who could have no claim upon the Museum, as he had no connection with it. It is to Mr. Jones's honour that he manifested no resentment, and always maintained the most friendly relations with his successful competitor, whose son now records the fact. "But," he said to the writer many years afterwards, "from that hour I determined that I would be Principal Librarian."

From this time forward Mr. Jones's history is almost entirely identified with that of the library of

the British Museum. He was entering upon his duties at the period of the most important changes that have ever taken place in that institution. The Parliamentary Committees of 1835-36 had proved the necessity for extensive reforms in every department of the Museum. The Trustees had already been for some years occupied with plans for a new catalogue of printed books. The removal of the library from its old quarters in Montague House to the new buildings was about to take place. It was fortunate, indeed, that just at this juncture the library should have acquired so eminent an administrator as Sir Anthony Panizzi, and in Mr. Jones an assistant who, though not especially gifted with the power of initiative, was in diligence, fidelity, accuracy, intelligence, and calm good sense as efficient a lieutenant as an able administrator could desire.

After the removal of the library had been completed, with the assistance of Messrs. Watts and Bullen, the next important task was the preparation of the rules for the new catalogue, in which it is probable that Mr. Jones took the largest share. They were prepared under Mr. Panizzi's chief direction, with the co-operation of Messrs. Jones, Watts, Parry, and Edwards. The extent of time devoted to them, and the extreme thoroughness of the discussion, appears from Mr. Parry's evidence before the Royal Commission of 1849, and Mr. Edwards's history of the British Museum. They were finally accepted by the Trustees and officially promulgated in July 1839. In one important

respect, the rule to be adopted for cataloguing anonymous books, the judgment of the compilers was overruled by the Trustees, and this is the source of many of the criticisms to which the rules themselves have been subjected. As a whole, they have received almost universal approbation; and their merit is sufficiently established by the circumstance of their having formed an epoch in bibliography as the basis of all subsequent work of the same nature. Very much of the discrepancy of opinion as regards cataloguing results from the failure to distinguish between the requisites of large and small libraries. The present writer is bound to say that in his opinion the alteration introduced by the Trustees is justified by a consideration of which the Trustees probably did not think, its indirect effect in providing, in the case of anonymous books, some kind of a substitute for what was then, and is still, the great deficiency of the British Museum library, an index of subjects. The same remark applies to the adoption of the headings "Academies," "Ephemerides," and "Periodical Publications," the introduction of biographical cross-references, and other features of the catalogue, perhaps exceptionable in theory, but assuredly very convenient in practice.

The catalogue was now (August 1839) fairly commenced under the immediate personal direction and responsibility of Mr. Panizzi. Mr. Jones, however, held from the first a primacy among the assistants actually engaged in its compilation, which became enhanced as the difficulties of the task

became more apparent from day to day. It had been supposed that the old titles might pass with slight examination: they proved to require the most careful revision; and the work of the revisers needed to be in its turn revised. Subject to a reference to Mr. Panizzi in extreme cases, Mr. Jones was the ultimate authority. His clear head, legal habit of mind, and attention to minute bibliographical accuracy, rendered him invaluable in this capacity, and his decisions constitute the basis and most essential part of the body of unprinted law which unforeseen exigencies gradually superinduced upon the original rules. He also took a leading part in the revision of the proofs. The causes of the suspension of the printing of the catalogue have been so fully treated by the writer in a paper at the Cambridge meeting of the Library Association, that it is needless to enter upon them here. It made no difference to the amount of Mr. Jones's labours, except as regarded the correction of the press. He continued to work upon the catalogue and also upon the supplementary catalogue of books added to the library, both as reviser and as general supervisor, until he became Keeper of Printed Books in 1856. His other duties were numerous and important: he exercised, in particular, the immediate control of the attendants, a responsibility the more onerous in proportion to the continual increase of the establishment. In 1843 he was engaged along with Mr. Watts in collecting the materials on which Mr. Panizzi based his famous report on the deficiencies of the library, which ultimately occasioned

so large an increase in the annual grant. In 1849 he prepared for the Royal Commission that crushing exposure of Mr. J. P. Collier's notions of short and easy methods of cataloguing which should be especially valued by librarians, as it is perhaps the best practical illustration to be found anywhere of the difficulties attaching to the correct bibliographical description of a book. He was also enabled to devote some attention to literature. About 1842 he wrote a large number of articles for the Dictionary of Universal Biography, edited by Mr. George Long for the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, a great and meritorious undertaking, unfortunately not carried beyond letter A, although the continuation as far as BE was actually in type. Mr. Jones's articles chiefly treated of obscure or forgotten writers, and required much research. He also contributed to the *Quarterly* and *North British* Reviews; his article in the latter on the British Museum Library (1851) is the best account of its administration to be found anywhere. He carried on an extensive correspondence with Mr. Wilson Croker, who continually had recourse to him for information on literary subjects. In 1847 he contributed to the *Archæologia* "Observations on the Division of Man's Life into Stages," with especial reference to Shakespeare's descriptions of the seven ages of man, and about this time wrote several other papers. In 1850 he edited for the Hakluyt Society "Divers Voyages touching the Discovery of America"; and in 1856, "The Travels of Nicolò Conti in the East," translated from the

Italian of Poggio Bracciolini. In 1858 he translated for the same Society the Oriental travels of Lodovico di Varthema, edited, with a preface, by his friend Dr. G. P. Badger.

Upon the death of the Rev. Richard Garnett in 1850, Mr. Jones became Assistant-Keeper of Printed Books, and succeeded Mr. Panizzi as Keeper upon the latter's promotion to the Principal Librarianship in March 1856. His period of office as Assistant-Keeper was chiefly distinguished by the erection of the new Reading Room, and the libraries in connection with it. The design of this grand and commodious structure belongs entirely to Sir A. Panizzi; but Mr. Jones saw the original sketch (engraved in the catalogue of the Reading Room reference library) as soon as it was made, and was consulted upon every detail during the progress of the work. One of his first duties as Keeper was to edit, with a valuable preface, the above-mentioned catalogue, which had been entirely prepared by Mr. W. B. Rye, late Keeper of the Printed Books. As Keeper Mr. Jones paid the greatest attention to the organisation of his department, which he maintained in the highest condition of efficiency. The number of titles written annually for the catalogue was unequalled before or since, and the department never had so many assistants of literary distinction. He followed in his predecessor's steps in using every possible endeavour to increase the library, both numerically and by the acquisition of special bibliographical treasures. The annual grant, long diminished from want of room to store ac-

cessions, was raised to £10,000 in 1857, and Mr. Jones proceeded to expend it with the assistance of the vast literary knowledge of his colleague Mr. Watts, and valuable aid in the acquisition of German and other old foreign books from Mr. Albert Cohn, of Berlin; in American literature from the enterprising and indefatigable Mr. Henry Stevens; and in ancient service-books from Mr. William Maskell. Among the many important official documents prepared by him may be mentioned a memorandum of objections to the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners; and reports on additions to the staff, on the superannuation of assistants, on Civil Service examinations, and on vellum books.

In July 1866, Mr. Winter Jones, having previously acted as Deputy Principal Librarian from December 1862 to May 1863, became Principal Librarian on the retirement of Sir A. Panizzi. It will have been inferred from the tenor of the preceding narrative that his abilities rather qualified him to maintain an existing system in a high state of efficiency than to initiate alterations, and such was precisely the part marked out for him by the character of the times. The institution, thoroughly reorganised during the last thirty years, required rest, and no impulse was felt towards the reforms and developments which have proved practicable and salutary under his successor. The great question of the removal of the Natural History collections to South Kensington had been determined for good or ill before he took office, and

no question of corresponding public interest arose under his administration. He presided, however, over a committee formed to consider the proposed transfer of the South Kensington Museum to the Trustees of the British Museum, but its deliberations led to no result. He was especially careful in ascertaining the qualifications of persons recommended for appointments in the Museum. His method, clear-headedness, and general capacity for business rendered him highly acceptable to the Trustees, especially those who, like the Duke of Somerset, Mr. Walpole, and Mr. Grote, took a peculiarly active share in the affairs of the institution. With Mr. Grote he was particularly intimate, and frequently visited him, and subsequently his widow, at their charming residence near Shere.

In 1877 his health, which for the last forty years had been good, began so far to fail as to render a winter residence in London exceedingly difficult to him. He obtained a four months' leave of absence, in the hope of an amelioration which did not take place. That his mental, and to a considerable degree his physical vigour were unimpaired, he had just proved by the transaction which entitles him to a record in the *Transactions of the Library Association*. It will be remembered how upon the foundation of the Association, a proposition, well calculated to enlist support, was made, that its presidency should be conferred upon a gentleman whose writings have laid the profession under deep obligations.<sup>1</sup> It is not the least of

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Edward Edwards.



Mr. E. B. Nicholson's many services to the Association which he called into being, to have discerned that it could not in its infant stage prosper without official patronage, and that, without prejudice to individual claims, its fitting head at that period would be the chief librarian of the chief library, the Principal Librarian of the British Museum. He accordingly invited Mr. Jones to accept the office of President, and to invest the young society with the sanction of official prestige, by consenting to open its first Congress, and deliver an inaugural address. Mr. Jones, however favourably disposed to Mr. Nicholson's project, might well have declined on the ground of engrossing public duties and delicate health, but he did not. The members of the Association will long recollect his appearance in the chair at the preliminary London meeting of 1877; the stanch persistence with which, though evidently suffering from indisposition, he delivered his carefully prepared inaugural discourse; and the firmness and dignity with which he conducted the proceedings until the close of the morning's meeting. It was his last act of importance as a librarian. His temporary retirement during the ensuing winter having failed to recruit his health, he resigned in August 1878, receiving a farewell address from his colleagues, and the individual tributes of several of the leading Trustees. He withdrew to Henley, where he had erected a residence at a considerable elevation, commanding a charming view; his winters were spent at Penzance, where, not long before his death, he

showed his undiminished interest in research by delivering a lecture upon the Assyrian discoveries. The present writer visited him at Henley in June 1881, and found him, although suffering somewhat from asthma, in tolerable health and excellent spirits, interested in the affairs of the world, and happy in the affection of his family. On the morning of September 7, after having entertained a party of young people to a late hour with great good humour, he was found dead in his bed. He had died of disease of the heart. He was interred at Kensal Green, his funeral being attended by most of his Museum colleagues then in town. He had married in 1837 the daughter of William Hewson, Esq., of Lisson Hall, Cumberland, a very amiable lady, who predeceased him by a few years, and whose protracted indisposition in the latter years of her life occasioned him much sorrow. He left one married and one unmarried daughter.

It may surprise those slightly or only officially acquainted with Mr. Jones to be informed that one of his principal characteristics was extreme kindness of heart, but such would be the opinion of all who knew him intimately. He was not emotional, but his affections were warm and deep: he was not impressionable, but kindness was with him an innate principle. If he ever seemed to act with harshness, it was from a constraining sense of official duty, and it might easily be seen that the necessity was very disagreeable to him.

It was exceedingly difficult, for instance, to get him to take steps for the removal of attendants whose incapacity from ill health had long been notorious: and he may be censured for having sometimes closed his eyes to circumstances of which he should have taken notice. What seemed in him stiffness—and had all the disadvantageous effects of stiffness—was in reality a reserve which made him appear constrained where men of less real courtesy and kindness would have seemed facile and genial. His was indeed by no means an expansive nature, but it was a very genuine one; he was deeply beloved in his family; his friendships were solid and lasting; and he exhibited that general criterion of a good heart, kindness to children and animals. He says in an early letter: “On Friday last I went out fishing. The weather was very fine for sailing, but not at all adapted for the sport we had in view: which was a great source of satisfaction to me, for spitting the poor worms for bait was a dreadful task to my unpractised nerves; and tearing the hook out of the throat of the animal when caught was, if possible, still worse.” He despised claptrap popularity, and was perhaps even unduly indifferent to the shows and surfaces of things. This concern for reality, however, combined with his legal education, made him a lover of justice; and he thus earned the respect and confidence of his subordinates, who knew that they might fully rely upon his equitable consideration, and his support in trials and difficulties. His judgment of men was in general

very correct, though he was capable of being swayed by long intimacy or personal liking. He was on various occasions subjected to considerable obloquy, but as this always arose from his opposition to the interested views of individuals, it only redounded to his credit with those acquainted with the circumstances. His literary tastes were such as befitted the bibliographer, but he admired many poets and novelists; especially Shakespeare, Goethe, Ariosto, and Wieland. He possessed a peculiar vein of dry humour, which he occasionally manifested with great effect. Intellectually, he represented one of the most frequent types in the generation to which he belonged—the generation of Grote and Mill and Cornewall Lewis—the essentially utilitarian.

He was not the man to innovate or originate, but was admirably qualified for the work which actually fell to his lot—first to be the right hand of a great architect, then to consolidate the structure he had helped to erect, and prepare it for still vaster extension and more commanding proportions in the times to come.

## THE LATE HENRY STEVENS, F.S.A.<sup>1</sup>

WITH the exception of the death of the late Henry Bradshaw, taken away so nearly at the same time, the Library Association could have sustained no loss more sincerely regarded by its members in the light of a personal bereavement than that which it has suffered by the death of Henry Stevens, on February 28. Mr. Stevens's interest in the Association has been so warm, his counsel so valuable, his genial presence and witty discourse such recognised features of attraction at its gatherings, that his loss must be felt as one almost impossible to supply. It must be long indeed before any one can fill Mr. Stevens's place as a link between the librarians of Europe and America, and it may be much longer yet before the happy union of bibliographical attainments with social qualities is witnessed to a like extent in the same individual.

Henry Stevens was born August 24, 1819, at Barnet, Vermont, U.S., hence the initials, G.M.B. (Green Mountain Boy), prized by him, there is reason to surmise, above his academical and antiquarian distinctions. He was sixth in descent from Cyprian Stevens, who had emigrated in the days of

<sup>1</sup> *Library Chronicle*, vol. iii., 1885.

Charles I. The family came originally from Devonshire. It had had its share of colonial celebrity and adventure ; one ancestor had successfully defended a fort against the French ; another had been stolen by the Indians, and ransomed for a pony. After receiving a fair ordinary education at the school of his native village, and two local seminaries, Mr. Stevens, at the age of seventeen, began to teach with a view of obtaining means to take him to college. He received from twelve to sixteen dollars a month, boarding with his pupils' families, "three days to a scholar, except when the girls were pretty, and in that case four." In October 1838 he proceeded to Middlebury College, defraying his travelling expenses by peddling cheeses contributed for that purpose by his excellent mother. His father, a man of literary tastes and culture, founder and President of the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society, seems to have been always behind-hand with the world, and to have been unable to aid his son to any material extent. It was customary for students thus destitute of support from home to defray their college expenses by teaching in the winter months. Stevens obtained leave to try his fortune at Washington, relying on the patronage of Governor Henry Hubbard, then Senator for New Hampshire. He called upon him accordingly, and though he was a Whig and the Senator a Democrat, he found himself, as if by magic, clerk in the Treasury Department "in charge of the records and correspondence of the Revenue Cutter Service," with a salary of a thousand dollars a year.

He was soon afterwards transferred to a clerkship in the Senate, where after a while he was employed as clerk to the Senate branch of the Joint Committee of the Congress for investigating the claims of Messrs. Clark & Force under a contract for publishing the American Archives, which it was desired to terminate. Much time and labour had been expended upon the volumes already printed, but it was generally surmised that the contract would be broken, because, as a Democrat remarked, "it would cost more than the building of the Capitol, and, what was worse, both the editor and the printer were Whigs." The Committee, who seem to have had no taste for literary drudgery, turned the task of digesting the papers entirely over to Mr. Stevens, who on his part, finding the documents intrusted to him insufficient, scraped acquaintance with Colonel Peter Force himself, and extracted abundant information from him without divulging his official position. At length the digest was ready, and the Committee, convoked for the purpose, heard their officer read the whole, up to the entirely unexpected and unwelcome conclusion, "Resolved, that this contract cannot be broken." Stevens was severely taken to task for his presumption, when Daniel Webster, a member of the Committee, interfered on his behalf, and advocated his view with such effect that "the Committee was discharged from further consideration of the subject." The contract was shortly afterwards rescinded. The service Stevens had nevertheless rendered to Force had an important influence on

his subsequent career. Quitting Washington, as he had always intended to do, and repairing to complete his education at Yale College, he took with him a commission from the Colonel to collect books, pamphlets, and MSS. in aid of the American Archives, which not only helped to provide the expenses of his University course, but endowed him with knowledge, tastes, and aptitudes qualifying him for future eminence as book-hunter and book-seller. Another main source of income was his fine penmanship, both as transcriber and teacher. He took his B.A. degree in 1843, and in 1843-44 studied law at Harvard under Justice Story, continuing to act as agent for Colonel Force, and forming connections with other collectors. At length, in 1845, he determined to visit England on literary errands, not expecting to be absent more than one or two years. Fortified by introductions from Francis Parkman and Jared Sparks, he took his departure, and in July 1845 found himself at the North and South American Coffee-House, the bearer of a huge bag of despatches for the United States Minister, Mr. Everett, and of a tiny one of forty sovereigns of his own. Mr. Everett's influence opened the State Paper Office to him; and ere the sun set on his first day in London he had visited the four great second-hand dealers of the day, Rodd, Thorpe, Pickering, and Rich. The last-named had just acquired the valuable library of M. Ternaux-Compans, and Mr. Stevens immediately purchased £800 worth on behalf of Mr. John Carter Brown of Providence, Rhode Island, from whom he



had a general commission to forage, and who showed wisdom as well as spirit in ratifying his agent's decided action. Those were the golden days of speculation in books relating to America, when rarities could be obtained for hardly more shillings than they now cost pounds. Mr. Stevens probably contributed more than any other man to terminate this happy state of things. While, on the one hand, he ransacked the chief European capitals as agent for wealthy American collectors, on the other hand he drained America on behalf of the British Museum, then for the first time entering into the market to any considerable extent. Mr. Panizzi had just prepared his celebrated report on the deficiencies of the Museum Library, in which he had said: "The expense requisite for accomplishing what is here suggested—that is, for forming in a few years a public library containing from 600,000 to 700,000 printed volumes, giving the necessary information on all branches of human learning, from all countries, in all languages, properly arranged, substantially and well bound, minutely and fully catalogued, easily accessible and yet safely preserved, capable for some years to come of keeping pace with the increase of human knowledge—will no doubt be great; but so is the nation which is to bear it. What might be extravagant and preposterous to suggest to one country may be looked upon not only as moderate, but as indispensable in another." With such views on Panizzi's part, he and Stevens fortunately encountered. Ere they had been long acquainted, a proposal came from the former,

that Stevens should undertake the agency for the supply of American books. Stevens at first hesitated; he had not contemplated remaining in Europe. He soon saw his way to accept it, and, in his words, "an exodus of American books to the British Museum commenced that has not ceased at the present time."

It would be impossible within the limits of this notice to enumerate all the important transactions in which Mr. Stevens was engaged, or the numerous instances in which his ready and inventive intellect was exerted for the furtherance of bibliography. One of his most important enterprises was the purchase of Humboldt's library, which resulted in disappointment. The Civil War supervening, his American patrons "shut up like clam shells," and most of the books were ultimately destroyed by fire while warehoused in London. A portion, however, had been previously separated, and the British Museum possesses numerous presentation copies to Humboldt, with the autographs of the authors. Members of the Library Association who were present at the Liverpool meeting will long remember Mr. Stevens's humorous account of his dealings with Mr. Peabody, and of his dismay when the collection formed by the philanthropist for presentation to his native town, at an average cost of one shilling a volume, was described in the local paper as the special selection of that intelligent bibliographer, Henry Stevens, Esq. Mr. Stevens's relations with the most important of all his customers, Mr. James Lennox, have been so recently

detailed to the Association that it is needless to do more than allude to his narrative as one of the most racy of literary monographs, affording an excellent idea of the writer's quaint, shrewd, and anecdotal conversation. It has been republished by his son in an elegant volume. Another remarkable passage in his life was his active share in originating and organising the Bible department of the Caxton Exhibition, when he propounded views respecting Miles Coverdale which involved him in many a polemic, and devised for the two different recensions of the Bible of 1611 the appellations of "Great He" and "Great She" Bible, which they seem likely to retain. The most interesting, perhaps, of all Mr. Stevens's achievements was his redemption of Franklin's MSS. from oblivion. Bequeathed by Franklin to his grandson, they had been only partially published, after a long delay and with suppressions which exposed William Temple Franklin to the unjust imputation of having disposed of a great part of them to the British Government. In fact they had been put aside and forgotten after Temple Franklin's death in Paris, and had eventually come into the possession of an old friend of his who repeatedly offered them for sale, but could find no customer, from the universal belief that they had already been printed and published. Mr. Stevens acquired them in 1851, and after thirty years' delay, and spending a thousand pounds over and above the original price in cataloguing, binding and adding to their number, ultimately disposed of them to the United States Government. Their

eventful history, involving a complete vindication of Temple Franklin and the British Government, is told in a privately printed volume of his own, accompanied with beautifully engraved portraits and a valuable bibliography of books by and concerning Franklin. The collection is also the subject of an article in the *Century* for June 1886.

Notwithstanding the engrossing nature of his pursuits, Mr. Stevens was always striving to aid bibliography by his pen. For this, in addition to his knowledge and acumen, and a cultivated taste which served him admirably on questions of typography, he possessed the qualifications of untiring industry and great facility of composition. He did much, and would have done more but for the sanguine temper which led him to undertake more than he could complete, and the fastidiousness which indisposed him to let work go out of his hands while anything seemed lacking to perfection. He left several bibliographical or biographical memoirs wanting hardly anything of completeness but the final imprimatur. Among them may be mentioned a life of Thomas Heriot, the mathematician, and a friend of Raleigh; an essay on Columbus's administration in the West Indies; and an account of the newly discovered globe by John Schoner. Another work of which he frequently spoke, a volume of British Museum reminiscences supplementary to Mr. Fagan's life of Sir Anthony Panizzi, existed, it must be feared, only as a project. It would have required leisure which he never possessed. The most purely literary

and perhaps the most important of his publications was his *Historical and Geographical Notes on the earliest discoveries in America*, a subject on which he was most enthusiastic. His catalogue of the American literature in the British Museum to the year 1856 is also a valuable publication, as are likewise his *Bibles in the Caxton Exhibition*, already mentioned, and his catalogues of the bibliographical curiosities relating to America in his own possession, issued under the title of *Historical Nuggets*, in 1862. A second series was in course of publication at his death. He had devoted great attention to the reproduction of title-pages and frontispieces by photography and photo-gravure. His admirable paper on the subject, read in 1877, will be fresh in the memory of members of the Association, as also the companion essay entitled "Who spoils our English Books?" read at the Cambridge meeting, a characteristic example of his humorous manner, not intended to be taken quite *au pied de la lettre*. His letters from Europe to his father are, we trust, destined to see the light. He was a frequent contributor to the *Athenæum*, especially on the history of the English Bible and early discovery in America, and his communications were always highly valued.

It is unnecessary to enter at length into Mr. Stevens's personal character when addressing a public to most of whom he was personally known. Perhaps his most distinguishing characteristic was his eminent large-heartedness. He had room in his mind for every individual and every interest.

He was cheerful, genial, expansive, and preserved his buoyancy of spirit under circumstances the most trying and vexatious. He possessed great sweetness as well as great liberality of disposition ; his combativeness was devoid of every particle of rancour ; shrewd and crafty, he was yet open and candid. Intent, as he could not help being, on his own advantage as a trader, the interests of his customer had a very definite place in his mind. He worked for his patrons even more than for himself, and prided himself more upon having made another man's library than he would have done upon having made his own fortune. As a man of business, his principal defect was an oversanguine temper ; the spring, nevertheless, of his enterprise, and hence of his success. "*Si non errasset fecerat ille minus.*"

Mr. Stevens died of a general decay of constitution resulting in dropsy, against which his vigorous constitution and indomitable cheerfulness contended with great hope of success to the very last. He had been married for upwards of thirty years to a highly accomplished lady, whose daughter by a former marriage is the widow of Mr. Hawker, the celebrated Vicar of Morwenstow. His son, Mr. H. N. Stevens, succeeds to the direction of his business, and inherits his literary and bibliographical tastes.

## THE LATE SIR EDWARD A. BOND, K.C.B.<sup>1</sup>

THE record of the life of the late Sir Edward Augustus Bond is one of steady unbroken success, so quiet and uniform as almost to conceal the credit to which he is entitled as a man of original mind and a vigorous innovator and reformer. Born on December 31, 1815, the son of a clergyman and schoolmaster at Hanwell, he entered the Record Office at seventeen, and there, under the tuition of Sir Thomas Hardy and the Rev. Joseph Hunter, laid the foundation of his extensive palæographical acquirements. Having obtained a thorough acquaintance with mediæval hand-writings, so far as this is attainable from English and French records and charters, he passed in 1837 to the more varied and extensive field afforded by the British Museum, where continuous experience made him a master of palæography in every department. The sudden and much regretted death of Mr. John Holmes in 1854 made Bond Assistant-Keeper of Manuscripts sooner than could have been anticipated, and in 1867 he succeeded his chief, Sir Frederic Madden, as head of the department. During thirty years he had been known

<sup>1</sup> Contributed to *The Library*, May 1898.

as an exemplary and diligent official, who enjoyed the confidence and esteem both of his immediate superior and of the head of the Museum, Sir A. Panizzi; yet few were prepared for the sweeping and vigorous measures by which, within a few years, he reorganised his department, reformed many defects which had been allowed to creep in, did away with the extraordinary mass of arrears which he found existing, and brought the work up to the high standard of regularity and efficiency which it has maintained ever since. Concurrently with these reforms, he executed the classified index of MSS. which has proved of such essential assistance to students, and performed a service, felt far beyond the precincts of the Museum, by the foundation of the Palæographical Society, whose selections of authentic facsimiles from MSS. of varied character in separate libraries may be said to have made palæography an exact science. Their value was evinced in the celebrated controversy respecting the date of the Utrecht Psalter, in which Bond took the leading part. This, however, was about the only occasion on which he came prominently before the public. His modesty and reserve kept him almost unknown beyond his own department; it was a genuine surprise to the world and to himself when, in 1878, he succeeded Mr. Winter Jones as Principal Librarian. The appointment had been looked upon as the appanage of Sir Charles Newton, at that time the most conspicuous officer of the Museum, and he might undoubtedly have filled it, if a brief experience as Mr. Jones's



deputy of its arduous and engrossing nature had not made him decline it as incompatible with his cherished archæological pursuits.

Sir Edward Bond's career as Principal Librarian repeated the history of his keepership upon a larger scale. As before, he was inflexibly diligent in his attention to routine duties, and boldly original when an emergency arose requiring special action. He saw that the time had come for the introduction of electric lighting into the Museum, and achieved this invaluable improvement in the face of many discouragements. The enormous bulk of the catalogue threatened to drive everything else out of the Reading Room. Sir Edward Bond first curbed the evil by introducing print for the accession titles, and then induced the Treasury to consent to the printing of the entire catalogue, a vast undertaking now on the verge of completion. His openness of mind was shown in no respect more forcibly than in his prompt appreciation of the sliding-press, an idea altogether new to him. An ordinary official would have hesitated, objected, and deferred action until some other institution had shown the way. Sir Edward Bond no sooner saw the model than he adopted the invention, and won the honour for the Museum. In his time the separation of the Natural History departments from the Bloomsbury Museum was consummated, and the White Wing erected with its newspaper rooms and admirable accommodation for the departments of MSS. and prints and drawings. The facilities for public access to the Museum were greatly extended under

him. Of the many important acquisitions made in his term of office, the Stowe Manuscripts were perhaps the most remarkable. He retired in 1888, among the most gratifying testimonies of the respect and affection he had won for himself. His manner had been thought cold and reserved, and such was indeed the case; but the better he was known the more apparent it became that this austerity veiled a most kind heart and a truly elevated mind, far above every petty consideration, and delighting to dwell in a purely intellectual sphere. After his resignation he spent upwards of nine years in an honoured and dignified retirement. He had been made a C.B. while Principal Librarian, and his last days were solaced by the bestowal of the higher distinction of K.C.B., which ought indeed to have been conferred much sooner. He died at his house in Bayswater on January 2, 1898, two days after completing his eighty-second year.

As a palæographer, whose life had been spent among MSS., Sir Edward Bond could not be expected to take the same warm interest in the Library Association that may reasonably be looked for in a librarian chiefly conversant with printed books, but he well understood the duty in this respect imposed upon him by his office as Principal Librarian, and evinced this by presiding over the London meeting of 1887. He married a relative, Miss Caroline Barham, daughter of the famous author of the "Ingoldsby Legends." Lady Bond survives her husband, and he has left five daughters,

all married. He wrote no independent work, but edited the *Statutes of the University of Oxford*, the *Trial of Warren Hastings*, and several books for the Hakluyt and other Societies, besides contributing numerous memoirs to the *Transactions* of his own special creation, the Palæographical Society.



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